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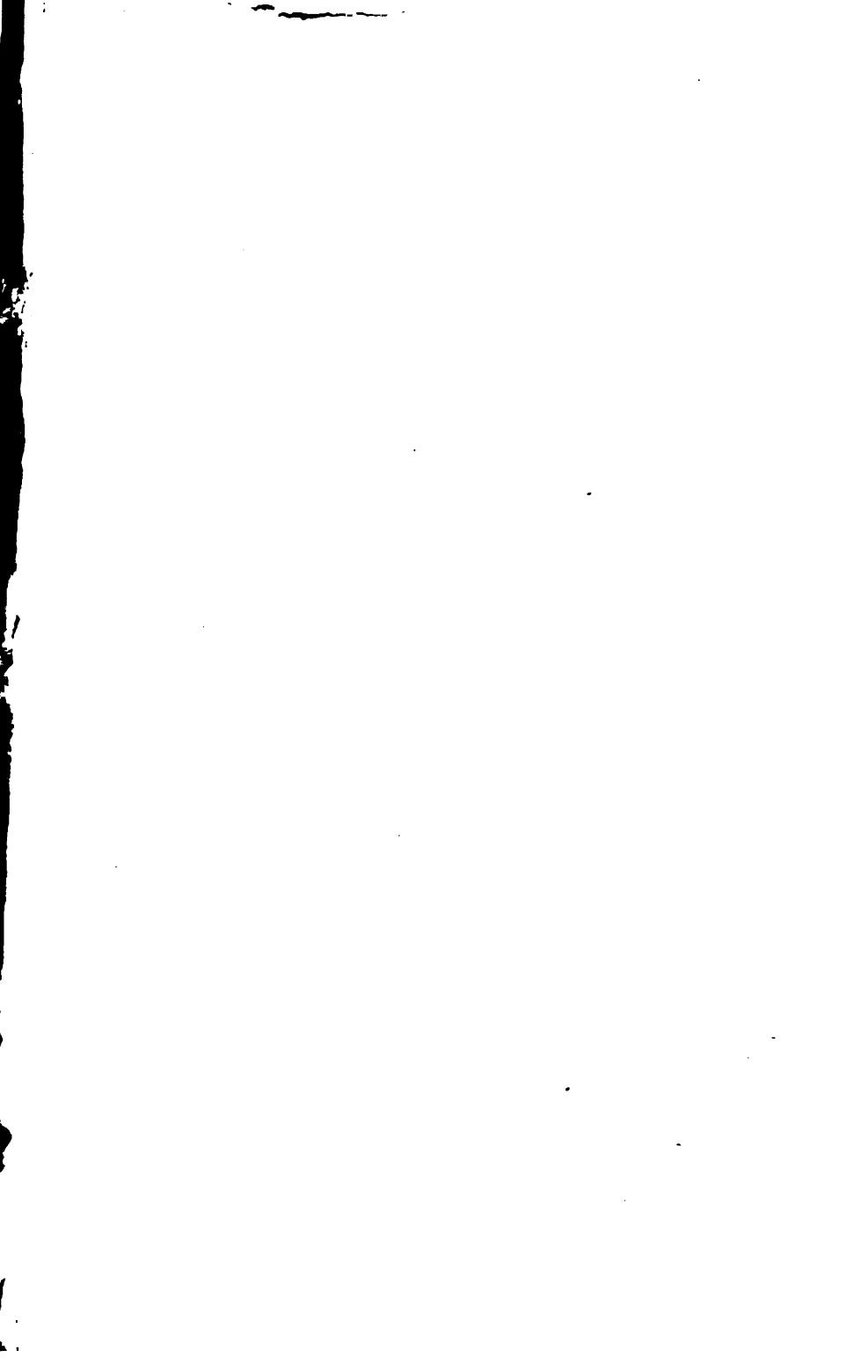
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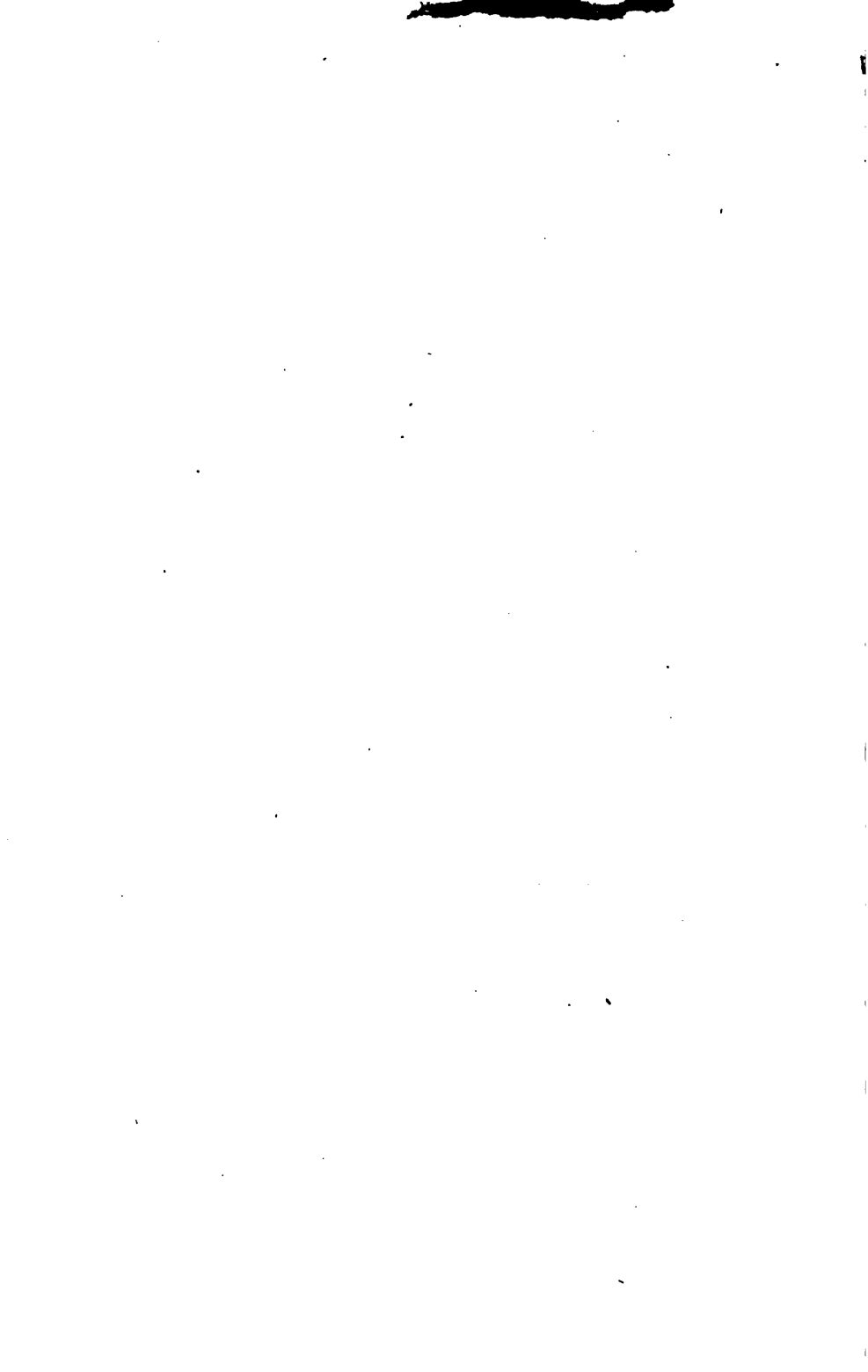
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ORTHODOX LONDON:

OR,

PHASES OF RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "UNORTHODOX LONDON."

C. Maurice Davies.

"SIRS, YE ARE BRETHREN!"

LONDON:
TINSLEY BROTHERS, 8, CATHERINE STREET, STRAND.
1873.

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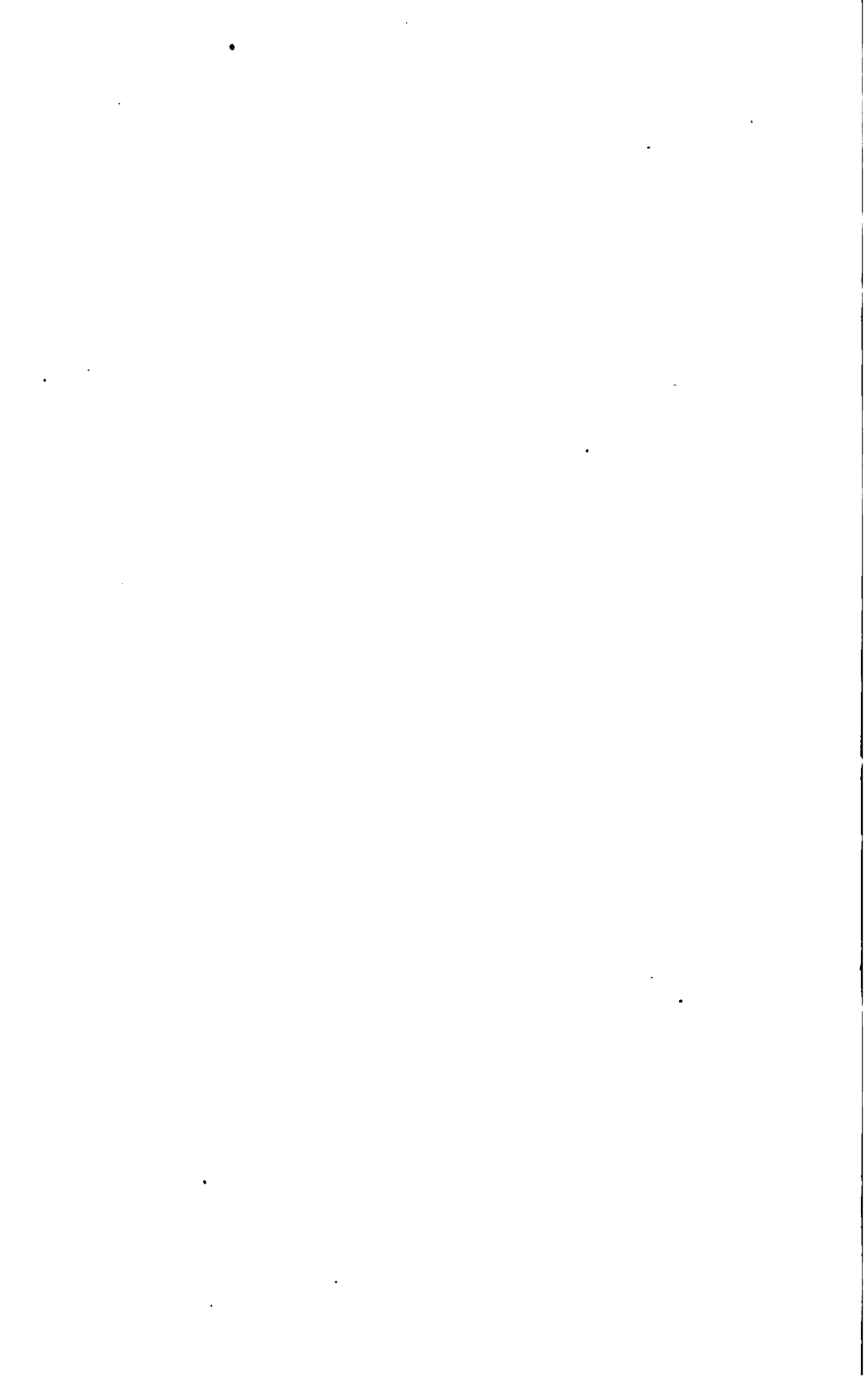
INTRODUCTION.

MOST of the following papers were contributed to the columns of the "Broad Churchman" during the brief period of its mundane existence; and they are now, with some few others, laid, like a wreath of immortelles, upon its premature tomb.

The nature of the subject, whilst it precluded the variety of "Unorthodox London," seemed to demand somewhat greater length in the notices of each preacher whom it has been my most delicate and difficult mission to describe.

C. M. D.

LONDON, 1873.



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ORTHODOX LONDON.

REV. H. R. HAWEIS AT ST. JAMES'S
CHAPEL.

AMONG the revelations of modern science none are more wonderful than those which tell of the richness and complexity of nature. Everywhere there is life within life, there are worlds beyond worlds. Not only, as we were made uncomfortably aware by visits to the Polytechnic in childhood, has the smallest drop of drinking-water its multitudinous inhabitants, but the parasitic animal whose world is the body of an insect has its parasite ; not only again are there " more worlds than one," but, outside the limits of our own planetary system, science begins to probe the suns of the galaxy and to delve into the mysteries of nebular as well as stellar cosmogony. Such are among the disclosures of the microscope and telescope respectively.

And something analogous to this is discoverable in the social and religious world. Where all seemed heretofore " simplex et unum," we are daily finding out distinctions of which our forefathers never

dreamed. To take a single instance from political life. Parties can no longer be ranged under the two divergent standards of Whig and Tory. We are obliged to coin such terms as Liberal-Conservative, &c., which would, a generation ago, have sounded about as comprehensible as White-Black or Hot-Cold. The same may be said of the religious world. The comprehensive distinctions of Protestant and Catholic seemed to our good old illogical ancestors quite sufficient to embrace all possible forms of thought—that special term “Catholic” being quietly conceded to the most protesting creed of Christendom. Now we have discovered that even Catholicism is not so much at one as it claims to be. There are Catholics and Catholics, even within the fold of St. Peter. Outside, the Anglican claims to be Anglo-Catholic too, tolerating the incongruity of the title for the sake of the “protest” against Roman assumption which it involves; and, to pass by the multiform “variations of Protestantism,” the Established Church herself numbers at least three great parties, the High Church, the Low Church, and the Broad Church. Satire still further subdivides them, cataloguing High Church, Dry Church, Low Church, and Slow Church. It was reserved for a Ritualistic Review some time since to add yet another branch in “Fast Church,” to which it consigned the author of a certain obnoxious publication. But even this is not all.

I myself was employed, a year or two ago, as special commissioner of a widely-circulated London newspaper, to describe the various phases of religious life in the metropolis ; and not only was I amazed at the undreamed-of fertility of the subject, which seemed literally to grow as I wrote—not only did I meet with strange outlying sects, such as Christadelphians, Sandemanians, &c., of which the very names sounded foreign, but within the bodies of Protestantism themselves I still found that marvellous complication—that system of wheel within wheel alluded to above. Plymouth Brethren were not simply Plymouth Brethren—they were Kellyites, Darbyites, or Newtonites. Even Jews, who seemed the very representative men of Unity and Indivisibility, were split up into the two sections—Orthodox and Reformed—differing in practice, if not in faith, almost as widely as Catholics and Protestants. There were varieties of doctrine or discipline even among Quakers and Jumpers. I feel sure all is not one even in Mr. Prince's Agapemone.

And this remark, which I here make of other religious bodies, comes strangely home to ourselves. The differences which fence off certain Nonconformist communities from the Establishment are, I find, often smaller than those which separate sections of the Establishment itself. It were invidious to mention names, though they rise almost instinctively to one's lips ; but the differences between a moderate Uni-

tarian and an advanced Broad Churchman—or between an ultra-Evangelical and the star of some little Bethel—would be considerably less than between the Broad Churchman and the Bethelite themselves. St. Alban's, Holborn, resembles the Roman Catholic Church in Field-lane or Moorfields far more nearly than it does the “Established” places of worship in Bedford-row or Islington.

It occurred to me, then, that an interesting and possibly not unedifying study might be entered upon without wandering beyond the pale of “the Church of England as by law established.” To portray the various *nuances* of belief and their embodiment in practice among the different strata of the Church of England might be no unworthy subject even for the pen of an ecclesiastical Ulysses who has wandered so widely, seen the dwellings of so many men, and studied their customs! It is such a series of papers I now commence; and, as on the previous occasion, I would premise, first, that I use the term “Orthodox” colloquially and half under protest to signify simply forms of faith and practice which are comprised within the elastic limits of the Established Church; and secondly, that I by no means presume to adopt the term etymologically, or to say who is right and who wrong, or even whom I think to be right and wrong. My mission is, I feel, only to describe, not to sit in judgment. Were the latter in any sense my function, I should certainly shrink from so delicate a

duty as the portraiture of Orthodox London. Sects external to the Church I might have ventured to pass in review—though I did not; but *esprit de corps*, if nothing else, would have shut my mouth on the subject of the Church in which I am an ordained and officiating minister.

The ordinary and proverbial difficulty of a “beginning” scarcely attaches to me in the execution of my present mission. To inaugurate an attempt so thoroughly eclectic in its nature as the present series, I felt at once that I must select a Broad Church clergyman for my “representative man;” though I shall at once make the *amende honorable* by following up my sketch with a typical High Churchman and Evangelical; but the Broad Churchman must plainly be to the front. Where, in surveying the metropolitan horizon, should I find the most pronounced individual of the genus? I might have fixed on a well-known dignitary of the Church, which I did not, because he *was* a dignitary and had been “done” to death. I might even, without being untrue to my title, have selected a clergyman of the Church of England whose breadth has proved as fatal to him as it did to the frog in the fable, yet who still claims to belong to the larger Church of England which is not, for the nonce, *any* national church. There were one or two well-known names which put in a claim, and whose claim I ignored for the very reason that they were well-

known, choosing in preference a gentleman who, though well-known too, is not as widely or generally known as he deserves to be ; and who, in my judgment, is incomparably best qualified to represent advanced thought in the Church of England at the present moment—namely, the Rev. H. R. Haweis, Incumbent of St. James's Chapel, Westmoreland Street, Marylebone.

There is one book, lying a little way out of the beaten track of literature, which I am constantly surprised to find unknown even by reading people : I mean Bailey's "Festus." Considering the intrinsic character of the poem and the way in which it has been lauded by such men as Tennyson, Thackeray, and Lord Lytton, it seems marvellous that any intellectual person should be ignorant of the book. Yet such I constantly find to be the case, as also with one or two other works I could name. So, too, not to know Mr. Haweis might seem, in the case of Londoners at least, to argue yourself unknown. Yet so it is. I am constantly asked, "Who is Mr. Haweis? Where is St. James's, Marylebone?" Writing, not for the initiated few, but exoterically for the uninformed many, it is a visit to St. James's Chapel and a characteristic sermon by Mr. Haweis I would make the subject of my present paper.

Westmoreland Street is a turning out of Weymouth Street, in that network of central London known principally to cabmen, and forming part of

the purlieus of Manchester Square. It must, I am very much afraid, be set down in Cockney parlance as a slum, and the exterior of the sacred edifice is thoroughly in keeping with its surroundings. An æsthetic High Churchman might deem he had come to the Ultima Thule of religious London, indeed, as his cab deposited him before the unsightly doors of St. James's. Should the plans of the incumbent be carried out this will not be the case beyond the present season. The sepulchre is at all events to be whitened. The façade is to be made as sightly as it can be short of utter demolition, and a bell-tower is to replace the present rickety belfry, which, it seems, is not only hideous but dangerous. Presenting myself at this unattractive portal one Sunday morning, I was confronted by the orthodox beadle in his bumble livery, who passed me on to the conventional pew-opener, with cap perhaps a trifle, but only a trifle, more jaunty than at the neighbouring Evangelical churches. There were evident symptoms of a congregation. Campstools lay in ambush, and there were flaps at the end of the pews ready to put up in cases of emergency. The attendance at St. James's I found was pretty nearly co-extensive with its capacities, and numbered something like fifteen hundred. Some men cannot be hid, and Mr. Haweis is evidently one of them. It was some time before I got a seat, and as the chapel was not nearly full during the service, I formed uncharitable opinions as

to the venality of the pew-opener, which I found from subsequent explanations were decidedly wrong, as so many of our hasty judgments often are.

If the exterior of the chapel was ugly, the inside tried to make amends by being slightly over-decorated. It was a hopeless task. It was like a plain old lady getting herself up with the "latest additions and improvements;" but it was no use. St. James's, inside as well as outside, was irretrievably ugly. What paint could do had been done to brighten up the edifice. The east end—there is no symptom of a chancel—was oak-stalled, floored with the conventional Minton's tiles, and adorned with cushions evidently worked by the fair fingers of ladies of the congregation, for there are, in these strong-minded times, Broad Church ladies as well as clergymen and gentlemen. The Communion Table was richly draped, though small; and on a super-altar were the unexpected adjuncts of jewelled gilt cross, four vases for flowers, and two large red tapers. The east window was filled with Munich glass, and represented the Transfiguration, the legends—"When He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is!" and, "He was transfigured before them"—running above and below. The rest of the windows in the chapel, or at least the greater portion of them, though of the ordinary court of justice or Little Bethel type, were filled with English stained glass. The figures were

unorthodox, because they looked human, and the legends were legible; but there was evidently an æsthetic element in St. James's for which I was not prepared. It put me in mind all along of an old Roman basilica Christianized under difficulties. A surpliced choir of eight men and twelve boys entered at eleven o'clock, with Mr. Haweis and an Assistant Minister, who was bearded as became a Broad Churchman. After a preliminary hymn, this latter gentleman commenced Morning Prayer in what might, by some stretch of imagination, be termed a monotone; though I could not quite discover to the end whether, as far as the clergyman was concerned, the service was meant to be choral or not. I fancy not. The responses were sung and accompanied. Mr. Haweis is a musician, and there were evident signs of the fact in the details of the service. The *Te Deum* and Nicene Creed were very simple and effective; the anthem, a bass solo and chorus, was Nares's "Rejoice in the Lord."

The service proceeded straight to the end of Morning Prayer, which was over at 11.45; and then there was a pause, during which the bell was rung and the organist played the slow movement from one of Weber's sonatas. Then I saw why the jaunty pew-openers left so many seats untenanted. A large moiety of the congregation came "to hear Mr. Haweis," and did not arrive until noon, when Communion Service was commenced by that gentleman

himself. After the Nicene Creed there was another pause, while the preacher went to the vestry. He returned anon, having exchanged his surplice and hood for academic gown, and entered the pulpit, in which, by the way, is no apparatus for a MS. I was exercised to think what the Archbishop of Canterbury did, who was one of the select preachers at this church last year, or what anybody did who did not happen to be a fluent extempore preacher like Mr. Haweis. The thought recalled to my mind an incident which occurred in this chapel on the occasion of my only previous visit. Dean Stanley was preaching, and the rostrum was then a venerable velvet-cushioned three-decker, instead of the elegant open pulpit of to-day. The Dean had three or four MSS., evidently venerable as the pulpit itself, besides the one he was using. He put these aside on the treacherous velvet cushion, having probably selected the one most appropriate to his congregation. By-and-by, in obedience to the laws of gravitation, the MSS. went flying down on the devoted head of an old lady in a little pew-box below, as I had seen for full five minutes they must inevitably do. This was bad; but a liveried Bumble made matters worse by coming from the very bottom of the chapel, carefully collecting the *disjecta membra* from the old lady's box, and taking them up the pulpit stairs to the Dean. I shall never forget the look with which that dignitary regarded the officious Bumble as he

cast the unfortunate MSS. on the pulpit floor, and proceeded with his discourse.

Mr. Haweis, according to what I found to be his frequent custom, took no text. He selected for his subject the wreck of the *Northfleet*, which had occurred during the previous week, and plunged at once *in medias res*.

He often wondered, he said, why people thought so much of going to church, where prayers were too frequently formal, and sermons had no bearing on every-day life. It seemed as though religion were a Sunday matter, and irreligion belonged to the rest of the week. Surely Sunday studies ought to prepare us to look with calm eyes on the trials of life. When any great calamity has happened during the week, he said, I always consider what people think about it when they read of it. Are they perplexed at it? In the great calamity of last week, I thought, Now here is a case of difficulty. People might say, There, I told you so! There is no God who cares for man. He sees people smashed in railway trains. He lets great speculations fail and ruin good and bad alike. He sees unmoved "from His cold hard sky" the great ship go down in the hungry sea. It is at times hard to realize a God of Love!

Worldly people are constantly perplexed by this; but "religious" people find no difficulty here or anywhere. They have a cut-and-dried theology to account for it all. If you don't believe it, they say

it is because you are not "regenerate." To account for such a calamity as this, they take up the Bible and quote a text, and then they feel comforted. Is it not written, "My thoughts are not as your thoughts, nor My ways as your ways!" God, they say, is different from man. These things would be cruel in man, but they are the essence of love in God. Have nothing to do, said the preacher, with explanations of this kind. If goodness and love mean one thing on earth and another in Heaven, then better leave off talking about them altogether. Love in Heaven may be greater than on earth, but it must be the same in kind. The language of Heaven and earth do not conflict. If they do, have done with theology, and confess that we know nothing; but don't, in God's name, let us cheat ourselves with words. Remember the context of the passage just quoted, "My ways are higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." God's love is only greater than man's. Then how can God look down calmly on sufferings which He might obviate? To justify God's ways to my own heart I fall back on the element of mystery which we find in the world. Make up your mind to two things: first, that there is overpowering evidence to prove God a God of Love. There may be difficulties in realizing this, because you are short-sighted. You have not all the facts before you. We work in a narrow circle on account of the limitations of our own minds.

We don't understand what is going on under our own noses. Let me give a homely illustration of how differently things look when we have all the facts. I accept the proposition "fire burns wood," but I bring wood to fire and it is not burnt. The wood was wet, but I didn't know it. I was arguing on insufficient premisses. It was a mystery to me that the wood did not burn. Tell me it is wet, and all becomes clear. So it is we are continuously meeting with little bits of facts in the world. We know "in part."

There are analogies in plenty to tell me God is a God of Love. God is a Father, and we are His children. That is the best way of expressing our relation to God. Now the child cannot see the wisdom of a parent's severity. So, again, the decision of a judge seems cruel to the family of a man sent to prison. The man was justly condemned; but ask *the man's wife* whether she thinks it just. If one ignorant of surgery saw a surgeon cutting and hacking away at a patient who was already weak and ill he might think the surgeon cruel. If he had all the facts before him he would see that the surgeon was acting wisely and kindly. If you had been present at that fearful shipwreck and seen the captain fire among a boatful of poor wretches who were only trying to save their lives, you might have said the man was a brute. Not so, when you are in possession of all the facts. He was devoting his life for his

fellow-creatures, ready to go down in that devoted ship, and so to inscribe his name on the roll of England's heroes. If we had not known all the facts his conduct would have seemed cruel. So too many things which seem pitiless on God's part may, from a higher standpoint, be consistent with God's love.

But still, when all is said, there rises before us the scene of that stern crowded with living beings, by the light of the last rocket, and ready to disappear beneath the waters, and you say, "How can it be? was there no help from above in such a terrible scene?" You are surrounded with worse misery than that. Pain, death, and suffering are all around you. These, however, are usual; but when sufferings come dramatically, and are, as it were, brought to a focus, then you are startled and question God's love. The sufferings in that ship were less than in one London district or street any single night. Take it at the worst, there were forty minutes of suffering. Those who suffered more than that were sailors. Compare that with an attack of rheumatic fever, or the weeks of exhaustion in a case of consumption. The mental anxiety was great; but the physical pain lasted only a few minutes.

This does not clear up the mystery, I know; but it tells us we ought to check our imagination by our reason. When we are led up to a great catastrophe, we should say, "This is only a concentration of what

is continually going on around me; and in the midst of it, I still feel God cares for me."

"What's death?" he proceeded to ask, colloquially as I have printed it. It is something to make Christians shiver with terror; but among heathens it was a good minister or angel sent to free men from troubles. There is in health and strength a natural shrinking from death. In sickness men become acclimatized to thoughts of death. This shrinking on the part of the young and healthy is greatly produced by the force of contrast. Why is it that the Christian fears death? Because he has had preached to him a gospel of Damnation, instead of a Gospel of Salvation. He has had preached to him a God who, after threescore and ten years, plunges people into an imaginary Heaven or Hell, for each of which they are equally unfitted. So we may say that, by all the laws of dogmatic theology, a great many people are going to be burnt in the fires of an All-Merciful God, and if we escape, it will be "by the skin of our teeth."

We grasp with difficulty the fact that God's judgments are going on now. God does not punish man; man punishes himself. Man, however, is not going to be let off! "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." The fire that is not quenched will be within him. The drunkard and the voluptuary reap their rewards here. So does the dishonest man when he is cut off from society, and so too shall

it be in the next world. The thought that we are in the hands, not only of a good, but also of a "philosophic" God, should reconcile us to the idea of death. It is only a change from room to room. It is only the mounting another step in the ladder. Only the removal of life from one fit stage to another fit stage.

What reck I, he concluded, if this be slow or sudden? In any case I go to Him who made me. And, looking at this catastrophe, you have no right to say, "My God, why hast Thou forsaken them?" unless you are ready to look up into the Face of the Father, and say, "Father, unto Thy Hands I commend their spirits!"

Such will probably be confessed on all hands a somewhat exceptional sermon to be preached within the walls of a church of the Establishment. It was delivered extempore, and with such rapidity as almost to puzzle a shorthand writer to report verbatim. But Mr. Haweis is thus exceptional, both in his preaching and his theology. The following are two of his utterances in a sermon, entitled, "Worship and Praise :"—

"Supposing the Anathasian Creed damns the greater part of the human race, as we are told it does, why, so much the worse for the Athanasian Creed. It cannot do the world any harm. The laity have seen that all along, and have said it in thousands of ways. In the first place no one knows who

wrote it, or what its precise ecclesiastical authority is; they don't even seem to know what it means: but if its assertions *are* as monstrous as they are generally understood to be, any man with common sense would give it up, and say that if the Athanasian Creed has damned the world, Christ has redeemed the world, and there is an end of it."

"People make a great deal of fuss about the extravagant luxury of the present age. God knows, there is plenty of selfishness, and where luxury is the outcome of selfishness, it is damnable and bad, and has the mark of Cain on its voluptuous brow. But why, I ask, are our people selfish and luxuriant? Why are the pursuits and pleasures of the world curses? Why is poetry immoral? Why is the theatre or opera-house, to a great extent, still unpurified? Why are all these things, I say? I will tell you why. It is because the Church has turned its back upon them. As far as the Church is concerned, that is the reason. The Church has cast out of secular life the æsthetic instincts which it has not crushed, which it never will crush. The Church has gone round to every place of amusement which was a little unclean, and cried out 'Unclean! unclean!' until the hard and fast line between good and evil has been drawn, and the bad has become worse without the good becoming any better! If you, in the name of religion, neglect the great human perceptions intended to refine, to elevate, and re-create

society, that neglect will bring degradation along with it; for it will bring the most fatal of all kinds of corruption—the perversion and abuse of naturally wholesome instincts.”

On the unpopular subject of “Modern Spiritualism” (which, rightly or wrongly, claims Mr. Haweis as at least a partial convert) he has thus delivered himself in a volume of sermons called, “Thoughts for the Times,” which, unlike the general run of those compositions, went through three editions in a short space of time.

“In some circles, the very rumour that spiritualism is to be scientifically investigated raises a hoot of indignation throughout vast Philistine communities, who pride themselves on common sense. Yet there has never been an age—this age least of any—when we have not heard a great deal about the supernatural—when things have not happened which nobody could explain; nor can it be maintained that the sort of explanations which the scientific world has offered us are at all adequate to account for the phenomena of spiritualism. The explanations which have been put forward sufficiently prove the amount of imposture that is associated with the word ‘spiritualist;’ but then we knew all that before. We wanted the scientific men to explain the residuum which puzzles most people who have paid any attention to the subject, but they prefer to discourse beside the mark to people who are already satisfied

that the whole thing is imposture. We will not say 'They are all dumb dogs ; they cannot bark,' they are rather like shy horses—they refuse to approach the hand that is stretched out to them, for fear of being caught.

"I am propounding no theory about spiritualism. I hardly know what it means, or why it is called spiritualism. I merely affirm that occurrences which cannot be confounded with conjuring tricks—seeing that conjurors and men of science are alike challenged to investigate them—seem to me to occur, and they certainly seem to me still to await some adequate explanation. I will commit myself to no theory. I have none. I merely aspire to be honest enough to admit what I believe—that a class of phenomena are daily occurring in our midst which have not been explained ; and perhaps I may be allowed to indulge in the vague hope that many hundreds of thousands who are so far of my opinion throughout the civilized world, are neither born fools nor confirmed lunatics, although I regret to say that some who are believers are impostors as well. But whatever truth or untruth there may be in these opinions, one thing is tolerably evident to my mind, and it is this—that if you accept the Christian miracles, you cannot reject all others."

Mr. Haweis is also author of the well-known work "Music and Morals ;" is himself an amateur violinist of no mean celebrity, musical critic on at least one

journal, and—*mirabile dictu*!—writer also of a pretty little tract called “Amy Arnold, a Sketch from Life,” which is not on the Anglican Index Expurgatorius, if such exists, but on the list of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Altogether, Mr. Haweis is a very exceptional “parson” indeed.

Without merging in that criticism which we have forsworn, it may be said that it is in a manner the speciality of Mr. Haweis to combine with the utmost breadth of doctrine those æsthetic elements which were for a long time without any assignable reason held to be incompatible therewith. Evangelical opinions, and anything like ritualism, we can easily understand to be incongruous; though even Evangelicism and Nonconformity are, coyly and shyly so far, “going in” for modest beauty in this respect. But with an eclectic system like the Broad Church, there seems no sort of reason why beauty of ritual should be ignored. It is not at St. James’s, Marylebone; and it is precisely this combination of breadth with beauty that constitutes the claim of Mr. Haweis to be the representative man we have made him.

FATHER STANTON AT ST. ALBAN'S.

THE one effort which I shall keep steadily before me in these peripatetic papers is to be appreciative ; to keep clear of the vulgar error which can discern no excellence beyond its own particular clique or coterie. True, my mission is to be descriptive, and not critical ; but we all know that there are two ways of looking at a thing. One method is to regard all with a jaundiced eye that does not square with one's own prejudices ; the other is to look at all, however uncongenial it may at first sight appear, with a calm and philosophic gaze ; and I feel I should be acting unworthily if I did not resolve to be as eclectic—that is, in the best and truest sense, as Catholic—as possible. True, I commenced my studies with a typical Broad Churchman. There seemed a natural fitness of things in doing so. Now I go to quite another extreme, and select a representative man of the advanced Ritualistic school.

But then, again, the peculiar character of the mission I have proposed to myself prevents me from selecting those individuals, at all events in the first instance, whose names are usually associated with the different bodies I describe. I take rather exceptional than

representative men perhaps. I might have taken Dean Stanley for my Broad Church portrait, and Mr. Mackonochie for my Ritualist. I do not; first, because I want to open up new ground; secondly, because in some cases the fact of a man being the recognised head of a movement or a party gets him into a groove or rut, which is fatal to originality. The *monstrari digilo prætereuntium* often has a paralysing effect on such a man's powers. It stereotypes him to the Shibboleths of his party. Such men are not to my purpose; at all events, not yet.

The admirers of Mr. Stanton, or "Father" Stanton as they delight to call him—and their name is legion—will think I am dwarfing his dimensions if I seem thus at all to concede the point that he is not a typical man; not so Mr. Stanton himself. He quite ridiculed the idea of being put forward, and almost refused information about himself, though in the most courteous and genial manner: so that all I can give will be a sort of pen-and-ink portrait of one whose influence extends much more widely than is suspected, even by himself.

Father Stanton, then, differs about as widely from the ordinary run of "High Church" curate as is possible. We are accustomed to think of such as a rather limp individual;—"tender eyed" as Leah, and with a falsetto voice perpetually monotoning on G. He is strongly ascetic and severe against "all the pomps and vanities of this wicked world." Not so

this young "priest." As one of the assistants at St. Alban's, Holborn, he is, of course, a pronounced and advanced Ritualist. But he is—*credite posteri!*—a member of the Liberation Society! His bugbear is Establishment. "Mention Church and State to me," he says, "and it is like shaking a red cloth before a mad bull." Some time ago, all the Mrs. Grundys of the country were attacking him, and a good many male, or, at all events, clerical Grundys, too, because, when he established the St. Alban's Club for working men, he allowed spirits and beer to be sold there, and did not prohibit the use of cards. "I like my rubber of whist and night-cap; why shouldn't they?" he asked. "As long as they don't get drunk or gamble, where is the harm in a glass of grog or a game at cards?"

Father Stanton, then, it will be perceived, thinks for himself, and dares to act as he thinks. He does not run in a groove. He presents the apparent anomaly of an excessively High Churchman, strongly seasoned with Democracy.

This peculiarity gives, of course, a tinge to his ministry. He is demonstrative almost to the limits of rant in his preaching, and in other respects has a supreme disregard of little clerical *convenances*. He has organized the watch-night service at St. Alban's on the eve of the New Year, which is like a ritualistic Methodist meeting more than anything else. The first time I heard him preach—several years ago—I

could not help thinking of Sydney Smith's imprecation on a bishop who had offended him. He wished he might be "preached to death by wild curates," and Father Stanton appeared to me the very curate to have cast the first stone. It was on Good Friday—a day of all others when there is least to rave about; but there was method in the madness. He has toned down since that, though without losing his peculiar characteristics.

If one may venture to speak of the *personnel* of one's portrait, there are in Father Stanton's outward man many elements of the pet curate. He is youthful in appearance, with dark, almost olive complexion, and jet black curling hair—not shaven and shorn, after the manner of the ordinary Ritualist; and, softly be it spoken, pretty *dévouées* do like to carry Father Stanton's photo about with them; but Father Stanton is the very reverse of a ladies' man. With all his physical capacities for such a *rôle*, he is infinitely above its littlenesses, and is every inch "a priest."

The morning I chose for my expedition to St. Alban's was the unpropitious one of the 2nd of February, the Feast of the Purification, when the first snow of 1873 fell, and winter virtually commenced. I had ascertained that Father Stanton was to preach "at mid-day mass;" and so, though omnibuses had struck and cabs retired into private life, I struggled along against a biting east wind and

blinding snow, eventually reaching Brook Street, where St. Alban's is situated, when "Matins," which immediately precede "High Mass," were only about half over. Mr. Mackonochie was intoning on a wildly wrong note, and the choir sang a hymn on the Purification to a distressing Gregorian tone as I entered. There was a fair congregation, far larger than one would have expected from the nature of the weather, which was calculated to act as a decided damper on any æsthetic proclivities one might have had. I scarcely think I should have struggled to St. Alban's save for a special purpose.

The altar was vested in white, and there was just a *soupçon* of the smell of incense about the church, but no signs that Candlemas was to be made a high festival of. In fact, Ritualism seems to have dropped out of its philosophy much of the "Mariolatry" that was suspected in its rudimentary form of Tractarianism. When morning prayers were over, two persons in surplices advanced and censed the altar, leaving their censers, I believe, in a side chapel, so as to keep up the fragrance, for I could see clouds rising a quarter of an hour after the operation was over; but the result was eminently satisfactory. An introit was sung, and then the procession of acolytes, celebrant, epistoler, and gospeler entered the chancel, preceded by a large cross borne aloft. Father Stanton, habited only in surplice, hood, and small white stole, passed to the clergy stalls, while the

rest went to the altar. The celebrant had a huge gold cross on the back of his cope, and the acolytes were gorgeous in scarlet cassocks and white surplices. Mr. Mackonochie himself occupied the humble position of epistoler. The celebrant intoned the Commandments in so low a voice as to be scarcely audible; but what I do not mean to call offensively the *mise-en-scène* of the "Mass" was magnificent; and the effect of all the congregation kneeling, when the Incarnation was asserted in the Nicene Creed to deep and solemn chords of accompaniment, was solemn in the extreme. The sign of the Cross was devoutly made when "the Life of the World to come" was mentioned; and so, at the close of the Creed, Father Stanton mounted the pulpit. His hood was fearfully and wonderfully put on; and the effect of his dark fine-cut face against the deep crimson silk was very monastic indeed. But the sermon soon removed all impressions of the kind. He prefaced his discourse with the publication of banns, prayers for the sick, and also "prayers for the repose of the soul" of one departed. Then he gave out his text, which was from Mal. iii., part of the Scripture appointed for the Epistle of the Festival—"The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His Temple." He dwelt on the peculiar character of the Festival under its double aspect of the Purification of "our Blessed Lady," and the Presentation of our Lord in the Temple. It was, he said, like a

last look at Christmas, over which was beginning to be cast the dark shadow of the Passion. The curtain was lifted for one moment, and the spectacle showed us the power of Christian heroism. We saw "our sweet and blessed Lady" carrying in her arms her Divine Son. It was, as he had said, a last lingering glance at Christmas, and a spectacle dear to every Catholic heart—that Mother with that Child at her breast. To-day she is passing, with St. Joseph, the foster-father, through the streets of Jerusalem. There are the dark shadows of the houses, and the glare of the eastern sunshine and the passers-by going to and fro. How often has she come before to the same place. Now, though a mother, she is "spotless as the driven snow."—Father Stanton cleverly pressed this image into his service. What thoughts must have been in her mind as she held in her arms her Son, the Everlasting God, the Prince of Peace! Yes, she bore the Eternal God, as she ascended those steps.

In the Temple, how simple was the scene! An old man takes the Child, and a thrill of joy passes through his heart. He had waited for the consolation of Israel. He speaks a few words; and then a woman stricken in years comes in. She utters her prophecy. She recognises the Lord of lords in the Child. The offering is made, the purification is over, and they leave. Night closes, and the Temple doors are shut. The Lord *had* suddenly come to His

Temple. He whom they yearned for had come. Heaven and earth had met together: God and man had met. The glory of the latter House had exceeded that of the former. The latter outshone its predecessor. The glory of the Temples had come. Only two persons recognised it. It had come—and gone.

The great thought of this festival is the super-human manifestation of God to those who watch for Him. He was not recognised by the scribe who knew the law, by the Sanhedrim, the rulers, the learned, or the mighty. Two old people who had long been waiting were the only ones who knew Him. That Babe who was set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Those who saw Him were “full of the Holy Ghost.” To them it was revealed that they should see the Lord’s Christ; and a light greater than that of the sun came to their hearts. That old man saw what the wise could not see. He took up the Lord of life in his arms; and he felt that now he could depart in peace, for he had seen the Lord’s salvation.

Dear friends, he said, this realization of Jesus Christ is far beyond all learning, art, or science. There is given to those who seek it, a light above that of the sun. Christ communicates Himself in His Divine Personality as well as Essence. Religion is unsatisfactory unless we can thus have personal

intimacy with Christ. If we have but heard of Him through men and books, He only exerts a secondary power on us. Our conception of Him merely amounts to a moral certainty, as with any other great hero we read of in history. We have seen Him only through the shadow of ideas. We have not taken Him in our arms and gazed on Him with ineffable joy.

There is, you know it well, a special light, transcendent and transluminous. The converted man will say, "I have read, and heard, and argued laboriously about Christ, but some day there came to me, at the corner of the street, or at my own fireside, or during some sermon, a mystic certainty about Him. The scales dropped from my eyes. I saw my Lord as I had never seen Him before. I felt the power of salvation. I went back again to my books, and, as I read the old pages, a new light flashed upon me. New arguments came which I had never seen before ; and Faith got from that mystic light confirmed them. I never can deny this ; for to do so would be to deny the secret of my life."

No one can say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Ghost. You may say you think so ; the Child might be God. But to see it with the light of the superhuman day is another thing. Far different to know that the Lord whom you have looked for has suddenly come to His Temple. Then you can say—

"Oh! my sweet Jesus, come to me,
My longing heart's desire;
With tears of love I've wept for Thee,
Thee doth my soul require.

"A thousand times I've yearned for Thee;
Jesu! when wilt thou come?
When will Thy presence gladden me,
And make in me a Home?"

If the Revelation of Christ is not so, if it depends on knowledge or reading, where is the Sacred Democracy of the Faith? It would be an oligarchy of genius. How could the little child make the sign of the Cross? How could the poor man be lifted up from the dunghill? Jesus Christ Himself seemed to burst into enthusiasm when He thought of this, saying: "I thank Thee, Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes."

Of course, the great question is, Have all these people conscious communion with God; this mystic knowledge of things about which we hear so much and see so little? Yes. Wherever God has created life, He has given certain powers, going out beyond the organism of the life itself. Plants have powers which seem to trench on animalism. The vine throws out its tendrils for support, and roots pierce down to a congenial soil. Animals show powers which seem beyond instinct. We speak of the sagacity of the dog and the cunning of the fox. So in the higher life of man, there are strange instincts. There are impressions

we cannot account for ; there are moments when we seem to stand out beyond ourselves. We feel intelligence within us we cannot explain, such as prognostications and presentiments.

When God makes His faithful ones partakers of Himself, He gives them a certainty far greater than that which is arrived at by logic and science. We can see this in the lives of the Saints, in the annals of the Church. People lead lives of extraordinary faith, which neither they nor you can account for. "By the Grace of God I am what I am," is all they can say.

But, you will still ask, Is it likely *I* shall ever feel like this ? I have heard of conscious conversion and intercourse with God, but it seems far above my head. I never felt it, though I have practised religion for years. I cannot put my hand on a particular day of my life, and say, "On that day I became converted." How is it I cannot do as others ? Do not be distressed. Go on waiting for the consolation of Israel. Do you not see that they in the Temple had been doing so ? That old man had been promised that he should see the Lord's Christ. He waited patiently, "full of the Holy Ghost," and at last the Lord suddenly came to His Temple. He *did* depart in peace.

So, too, that old woman ; she had long fasted and prayed. Day and night, Scripture says, she had waited for the consolation. It had not come, but day after day, and night after night, she still went on—still

fasted and prayed. "In eternity time struck the hour," and Jesus Christ came. She had not waited in vain; and henceforth she could talk of nothing else to those others who were waiting too. And have you not felt this? You groan and pray to see God: to press Him to your heart and feel Him yours. You want to grasp "what lies behind all your Prayers, Communions, and Confessions." You want religion to be a personal affection for Christ, something you can never let go. It shall come to you: when or how I cannot tell; but it shall come. Perhaps it may be at the end of your life, when the shadows of this world pass away, and the morning breaks over the everlasting hills. You shall see the King in His beauty, whom you had tried to follow at such a distance off. Then will you say, "O God, thou art my God. Jesus Christ, thou didst come to earth for me." And you will be able to add, "Lord, now lettest thou Thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes *have seen* Thy salvation!"

A translation of the hymn "O quam glorifica" followed, and the usual choral communion or "mass" was proceeded with. During Communion, Keble's exquisite hymn "Ave Maria" was sung to music, consisting of a tenor solo, with chorus of the words "Ave Maria" only. Very few persons communicated.

The *cultus* of St. Alban's has been too often described to need reiteration here. It was bright with

colours, odours, flowers, and music. According to the theory of the Ritualist, these were, of course, no foreign adjuncts supervening on the English system, but simply what the English ritual was and would have been had the Reformation never run riot into Puritanism. When the great bell of the church boomed out among the snow-clouds at the moment of Consecration, a Broad Churchman might not be able to realize the fact in its intensity; but to those who knelt, or rather prostrated themselves there, the Sacramental act *was* a great fact.

When I "interviewed" Father Stanton in his anything but monastic room in the clergy house, he said, "The only two points in which we have made concessions are, that we do not light the candles or burn incense during celebration. All else is as before." The great influence at St. Alban's is, he says, in the Confessional; and that influence he attributes to the fact that confessions are made openly in church, not in the vestry with closed doors.

As an instance of the geniality which overlies the whole system at St. Alban's, he told me, after describing the numerous guilds, sisterhoods, *crèche*, orphanage, &c., that at the Mothers' Meeting a titled lady once came in and said—"I suppose, Father Stanton, you read these women a chapter in the Bible while they are at work?" "Not so," he said; "I am at present reading 'Nicholas Nickleby,' and have just finished 'Adam Bede.'" "Then you begin;

at least, with the Collect for the week." "As that Collect happened to be 'Blessed Lord who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning,' &c., I did not think it quite appropriate to 'Nicholas Nickleby,' " he said.

And the congregation who listened to the earnest words of this young preacher are not, be it understood, boys and girls. There were grizzled men, and young men in plenty. The women were in excess that snowy morning, it is true ; but the congregation was more evenly balanced than in most London churches, and the poor were decidedly in the ascendant, and fully on a par with the rich. One very aged sister in ecclesiastical dress particularly attracted my attention by the way in which she hung on the words of the preacher and followed the beautiful music. Her face might have been that of a Mater Dolorosa or St. Anna. It had a history in itself.

Father Stanton, young as he is, combines, in a very singular degree, the opposite elements of Ritualism and popularity, too often antagonistic, but why ? His sermon might have, with few alterations, been preached in a Conventicle. Preached in the ultra-ritualistic Church of St. Alban's, Holborn, it was a very exceptional one indeed ; and, though not promising, from its subject, to be a distinctive one, proved, perhaps, as fair an example as I could have met with of the apparently incongruous personage—the Democratic Ritualist.

MR. FORREST AT SOUTH KENSINGTON.

To an anxious inquirer bent on an excursion into regions Evangelical, it might seem that Clapham or Islington would afford unbounded attractions, since it is in these that the so-called "Low-Church party" traditionally "most do congregate." But, rightly or wrongly, I have determined in these ecclesiastical rambles to wander a little out of the beaten paths. Just as I avoid men whose names proverbially head the different schools of thought, so also do I eschew localities consecrated to special sects, and try, as far as possible, to break up new ground. Thus was it that, avoiding both north and south, I turned due west for my typical Evangelical.

For in western London, as the focus of metropolitan civilization, just as in Alexandria of old, where the schools of philosophers jostled the Christian churches, every shade and colour of religious belief may be found. Around the beautiful Pro-Cathedral at Kensington a Catholic population has sprung up just as around the cathedral-close in ancient times. Ritualists in every stage of advancement throng the frequent services and swell the teeming coffers of St. Mary Magdalene's, Paddington. The synagogue and

the kirk stand wall to wall in the Harrow-road, and the New Jerusalem Church has stationed its apostle, Dr. Bayley, almost under the shadow of the Vicarage-elms in the old Court suburb. It is, of course, only with the Establishment that I am at present concerned; but our National Church is represented in its every phase. From the beautiful Kensington Parish Church lately raised out of the ashes of its ugly and venerable predecessor, as from a centre, one might exhaust the theological thermometer, ranging from fever-heat at St. Matthias, Earl's Court, to zero at St. Matthew's, Bayswater, where Archdeacon Hunter elects to "blush unseen." I had half resolved to make him my representative man of Evangelicalism *pur et simple*, but the Archdeacon begged so hard not to be "done" that I had, in mercy, to let him off and seek another type among the fertile pastures in this land of the West. The fact was that since his return from his twenty years' work in Rupert's Land, the Archdeacon had thought fit to retain "the archidiaconal title" even when not discharging "archidiaconal functions." At this the penny local papers were wroth, and discharged upon the Archdeacon the vials of their anger, and *quieta non movere* became the Archdeacon's policy forthwith.

The world was all before me where to choose; and, though limited now to a single department of religious thought, I absolutely suffered from an *embarras de richesses*. Should I seek the shrine of the

Rev. Daniel Moore at Holy Trinity, Paddington? No, I would reserve him for the Golden Lecture. Messrs. Moorhouse and Æmilius Bailey presented strong attractions, but these were still too much men of the old school; men like Daniel Wilson, of Islington, whose very name has an Evangelical smack about it. I would none of these. I wanted a man who should represent the Evangelicalism of the hour, not the *cultus* of my great-grandmamma; who should be to his system what Mr. Haweis and Mr. Stanton were to the old conservative Broad Church and to ordinary Ritualism respectively. Such a man, I was given to understand, was the Rev. R. W. Forrest, late chaplain at that nursery of evangelical orators, the Lock Hospital, and now vicar of St. Jude's, South Kensington. To South Kensington, accordingly, I went, *viâ* the Metropolitan District Railway, near the Gloucester Road Station of which St. Jude's is situated, being one of those handsome new structures locally termed the "Ten-thousand-pounders," from the traditional cost of their erection, which is very likely quite a false estimate.

St. Jude's lies upon the very outskirts of civilization, among the fast disappearing lanes and market gardens of a receding rusticity. Long reaches of green fields lie incongruously among streets, while here and there a veritable old farmhouse crops up, and Cockney lovers were gazing spoonily into the cabbage-gardens as I sped through the mud and

snow on Septuagesima Sunday to church. Crowds of well-dressed worshippers were defiling through those lanes, disturbing Corydon and Phyllis in their conversation, and making Mr. Forrest's advent a very death-blow to their billing and cooing. The church is a handsome Gothic one, well worth the somewhat heavy price alluded to above, which is understood to be the cost of locating in the wealthy parish of Kensington.

Neither outside nor inside did St. Jude's bear the slightest resemblance to what used to be a Church of "the strictest sect;" but then were not Nonconformists so far "trimming" as to come out with organs in their worship and crosses on every available point of vantage in their buildings? St. Jude's was so far only keeping pace with the times, or perhaps going ahead just one or two steps in advance. There certainly was not a trace of orthodox ugliness in its rather gorgeous altar or "Communion Table," as I suppose it would still be termed. It was surmounted with glaring Minton tiles, inlaid mosaic-wise, in the wall, and surmounted with an east window, whose grotesque figures and Dolly Varden kind of costumes were all that the Ritualist would have desired. Within its enclosure were two highly æsthetic Glastonbury chairs, and a light airy kind of rail cut off the penetralia from the handsome oak-studded chancel. Here, again, all was as "proper" as possible. There was a low reading-desk and a not very high

pulpit. There was a lectern with bookmarkers as wide and as gay as a ritualistic stole, and a graceful coloured corona hung suspended from the roof. Certainly it was never so seen in Islington or Clapham. I had almost forgotten to add that the very Palladium of old Evangelicalism—the Ten Commandments—had been conveniently disposed of by dwarfing them to the smallest possible dimensions, and setting them up in orthodox ecclesiastical hieroglyphics in a corner, where they obtruded as little as possible on the public gaze. The body of the church was seated with low pews for a vast congregation, and the galleries retired modestly into the aisles, as if protesting against the necessity of their presence. Most of all unlike the Evangelic arrangements of my boyhood, the pew-openers were not the mob-capped widows and spinsters I had remembered, but male attendants in white ties, bearded like Broad Churchmen, but smiling seraphically as they handed the initiated to their seats, or pointed a new comer and prospective “renter” to the advantages in point of pulpit range commanded by some well-placed pew. However, they were courteous and obliging, not waiting until after the second lesson before they gave one a seat, or lingering for a “tip” when they had done so. There was a good deal of nodding and conversation among the congregation during the quarter of an hour whilst they were assembling; but then is it not prescribed in the horn-book which

contains the legend of Tommy and Harry, that it is a necessity of etiquette to bow to one's friends on entering church? The St. Jude's people were punctilious in this respect. There was even a little giggling among the young ladies, and some skirmishing about seats and hassocks among the old. The ladies were largely in excess, and the bulk of the congregation were of the upper middle class. It was scarcely what one would call a fashionable or intellectual congregation, but they were, to a spinster, devout "Forresters." I could see that.

At eleven o'clock a voluntary was played, and so ornate were the appendages of this Evangelic Church, that one would not have been at all surprised to see a surpliced choir stream in from the vestry. They came, however, a long file of men and boys in the ordinary garb of every-day life, and with a slow and measured step that reminded one of a cheerful funeral. A curate followed, in ordinary surplice and hood, but with the now almost obsolete bands as big as a barrister's. Then came Mr. Forrest in episcopal-looking surplice, with largely developed Dublin M.A. hood, but still that badge of orthodoxy the Geneva bands, which always were, for some unaccountable reason, the mainstay of the Evangelical body, seeing they are among the most "Catholic" of all possible appendages.

The responses were given in a monotone, and of the chanting I can only say it was to my mind the

perfection of Anglican antiphonal singing. I marvelled to hear that the Psalms were sung instead of being read as they used to be. Surely this is only a concession to common sense; and I must repeat I never heard the florid Anglican chants so perfectly sung as at St. Jude's, South Kensington. Mr. Forrest read the lessons somewhat pompously, and, like Mr. Bellow, with a considerable difference. The canticles were sung to several chants, which made them almost as complicated as Cathedral "services," and the hymns were taken from the Hymnal Companion to the Book of Common Prayer, compiled by the Rev. E. H. Bickersteth, of Hampstead, a sort of compromise between Tate-and-Brady and Hymns Ancient and Modern, omitting, of course, the objectionable Catholic translations, and preserving most of the *chef-d'œuvres* of the popular manual.

The criterion of the state of feeling in St. Jude's was evidently given in the recitation of the Apostles' Creed. It was sung on G by the choir, and of those gentlemen three out of seven on one side turned to the east, the other four remaining *in statu quo antè*, with a rigid look on their face as though they would die sooner than yield. A larger fraction bowed at the Sacred name. One could gauge the state of the theological temperature pretty clearly from this fact. St. Jude's was Evangelical in point of doctrine perhaps, but "a little high," as is vulgarly said, in point of ritual.

There was no Litany, but the final prayers of the morning service were read after the third collect, and the General Thanksgiving was recited full-voiced by the whole congregation, no longer on a single note, but with the natural intonation; and I venture to think that full unmusical sound had more of the old Puritan ring in it than the elaborate service of which it formed an almost incongruous portion. I do not say I liked it better, or that it was the worthier expression of worship—that is not mine to judge—but it was certainly more “Evangelical.”

The Communion Service was read by Mr. Forrest, and I was still more reminded of Mr. Bellew in his delivery of the Commandments. A musical kyrie was sung, but it was painfully slow, and then Mr. Forrest passed to the pulpit, arrayed not in the academic gown of ancient times, which has ceased to be a symbol with any but very lag-behind Evangelicals, but in surplice, hood, and stole, which he had worn during the service. Prefacing his discourse with a simple collect, and after a brief announcement of an impending lecture, Mr. Forrest gave out as his text a passage from Revelation xxi. 5—“He that sat upon the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new!’” Now, an Evangelical sermon, though easy to transcribe verbatim, is difficult to analyse; and this was especially the case with Mr. Forrest’s. There was great *copia verborum*, but there were frequent repetitions and no very logical arrangement.

It was, however, to the following purpose :—The compilers of the new Lectionary had, he said, an evident purpose for placing in juxtaposition on Septuagesima Sunday the opening of Genesis and the close of Revelation ; the old and the new creation, and he proposed to draw out some point of resemblance between the original creation and the spiritual regeneration of man's soul.

1. Both the old and the new creation were the production of a new order of things. The world before the Mosaic account of creation was said to have been void and dark. These opening chapters of Genesis had been made the subject of keen controversy, and some thought them in hopeless conflict to science. Even "professed believers" sometimes held—it might be properly so—that the Bible was a book for the masses, and that you must not expect in it scientific accuracy. Others, again, thought the Mosaic account of Creation and the Fall allegorical. But, be this as it might, the opening words of Genesis implied a previous ruin of the world, possibly by evil spirits. It had become dark and void when God uttered the fiat of Creation.

The spiritual parallel was at hand. Before regeneration, like the world before "creation," the soul was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. The peerless form of its Maker's image was lost. It was "destitute of its pristine beauty, and the crown had fallen from its

head into the dust." (Mr. Forrest garnished his long discourse with frequent flowers of speech like this to an extent it would be impossible to convey in a brief analysis.) The soul was void, "like a house without furniture." The body, once a temple of the Holy Ghost, had become a cage of unclean birds, a haunt of satyrs and dragons. The house might be swept and made alluring to the eye, but there was still about it an appalling vacuity.

But our view of Nature affected our acceptance of the Gospel. If we said, as many did, that sin was only a form of ignorance, we were blinded as to its nature, and were not able to value aright the intervention God found it "imperatively necessary" to make when His Son died. We must, he said, discard the idea that the seeds of good were in man requiring only education to foster. The work of the Holy Spirit was not the resuscitation of dying sparks, but the introduction of a new fire, a new life.

2. There was a Divine Agent both in the old and new creation. Very sublime were those words: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." None could tell when the beginning was: possibly hundreds of thousands of millions of years before! But those words exposed the fallacy of erroneous systems, of Atheism, Polytheism, Pantheism, and Fatalism. So, too, was there a Divine Agent in the spiritual creation. Man, he said, had no inherent spiritual excellence. There was about as much truth in the

idea as in the poetic fiction of "forms of loveliness in unhewn stone." Man cannot create. He can only combine. All is the work of the spirit, who—the old Hebrew says—"brooded" over chaos. We, as St. Paul puts it, are his workmanship. We cannot take a step without the Holy Ghost; and yet every step we take is our own, in holiness even more than in acts of sin. As spring flowers will soon be drawn out of the earth by the sun, so are our souls by the love of God. Oh! (It is impossible to convey by any spacing the length of this ever-recurring interjection.) Oh! stupendous miracle of love. In the creation, God only spoke, and it was done; but when He made the new creation, He "must needs" come down, take flesh and blood, and die. The Third Person of the Trinity, too, "must" descend to remove obstacles to the purposes of the Most High. If the heavens show the handiwork of God, shall not the redeemed be to His glory for ever?

3. There was also a divine plan in each creation. It was not the effect of chance. God said of the old creation that it was "very good." It was a deliberate act of intelligent wisdom answering to the archetypal pattern of the divine mind. So, too, in the new creation, in the plan of salvation. "Now look here," said the preacher, becoming colloquial for the moment, "deny that doctrine and you throw the Gospel into confusion, like touching the law of gravitation in the natural world. Deny the plan of

Redemption, and you snap the adamantine chain that binds my soul to the Throne of God !”

4. Lastly in the order of events, there was a striking parallel between the natural and spiritual creation. Light was first created. Elohim said “Let light be, and light was !” Even the heathen admired the sublimity of that utterance. It was not that light was then first created ; but light already existing was shed in this lower sphere. The spiritual parallel was again at hand. God shines into our hearts. The eye is not the cause of sight, but the light shining on the retina ; and so is God the source of illumination. With regard to the distinction between light and darkness, too. Darkness was only negative. So God only created goodness. Sin has no positive being ; it is the defect and destruction of being. Philosophers might talk very finely about virtue and vice being relative terms only, and say there was no absolute standard. “The Lord deliver us from such philosophers and their philosophy. It will be the curse of society.” “If the planets,” Mr. Forrest proceeded to say, “refused to obey the sun, they would become *wandering stars*, and so should we if we did not reflect the light of Christ. Like the Apocalyptic angel, stand in the sun. Shed forth life-giving light. Christ rules you, and you, as lesser lights, should rule the world.” But “whatever you do to elevate people up to you,” he added towards the conclusion,

"take precious good care that they do not drag you down to their level."

At the conclusion of this very lengthy address Mr. Forrest said a few words on the subject of the collection then about to be made for the choir. The nature of this brief address was even more remarkable than that of the sermon which had preceded it, as evidencing the power of the Evangelical clergy over their people through the pulpit, scarcely exceeded by that of another school in the confessional. The words were authoritative as a Papal Bull, brusque as a direction by Abernethy. He was aware, he said, that some of the congregation objected to so much music, and especially to the chanting of the Psalms; but it was his opinion that the Psalms should be sung, and while he remained vicar such would be the case. He begged the congregation to contribute, or, if they had not come provided, to send him their subscriptions. So they paid their contributions like good people, and the organist played us out of church to a jaunty air which would have made an old Puritan of Islington or Clapham shiver in his shoes.

Now, here surely is a very exceptional, yet possibly a transitional Evangelicalism, heralding, it may be, a vast change. On that very morning the Rev. Capel Molyneux was holding his first "Liturgical Service" in St. James's Hall; and the next evening Mr. Mason Jones was to inaugurate a series of

meetings for the Disestablishment of the Church of England. Is such the tendency, viz., towards fusion of thought and practice in the Church, and the elimination of those rigid bodies and original minds who refuse to adapt themselves? We may not augur, but certainly there has been evidenced in these three preliminary sketches an unexpected consensus, in practice, if not in precept, between three bodies generally supposed to be diametrically opposed either to other—the Advanced Broad, the Democratic Ritualistic, and the Transitional Evangelical Church of England.

REV. T. TEIGNMOUTH SHORE AT
BERKELEY CHAPEL.

WHEN one of our leading scientific men was asked to sit on the Committee of the Dialectical Society for investigating Spiritualism he replied that he would as soon take tea and spend the evening with the curate of the parish ; which was his particular form of expressing intense disinclination to accept the proffered honour. There is a wide-spread idea that clergymen are, as a rule, what one of our literary papers termed "fatally uninteresting ;" nay, there is a sort of notion among the faithful that it is not right for parsons to be interesting, or do anything but preach and attend mothers' meetings. To play any instrument but the flute or pianoforte is wicked for a curate—a guitar occupying debatable ground, but savouring too much of the serenade. To write, or, as the elect term it, to be a "literary character" is "Bohemian." I verily believe many good but narrow-minded persons think that writers, actors, and poets—except, of course "goody" ones—live in daily defiance of the rules of morality, and are what they group under their wide category of "improper persons."

There is no doubt, however, that the class of clerical contributors to our London journals and magazines is a large and increasing one. Many a secular editorial chair is filled, and ably filled, by a gentleman in orders. The *rationale* is not far to seek. With many University graduates a liberal education constitutes the sole stock in trade, and it is a fact beyond dispute that Providence always seems to bless with a special benediction the domestic quivers of those on whose heads have rested episcopal hands. Failing interest for ecclesiastical preferment, or a rich maiden aunt or thriving papa to build a church, there are two courses open to such clerical "Bohemians"—tuition or literature. Some combine both.

And such men, in the metropolis and most large towns, constitute almost a class by themselves. They are generally poor, or not rich, men; and consequently cannot indulge in the "luxury of private opinions" to the extent of becoming advanced Ritualists or pronounced Broad Churchmen. As Evangelicals they may make it pay if they go in for hymns or pious leaders; but, as a rule, your literary or scholastic parson is not a man of extreme opinions. He brings to bear, however, on orthodox dogmas, a vigour of thought for which the Church, perhaps, is not sufficiently grateful. Curates in regular harness, especially the bachelors and incapables, denounce him as "irregular," because he does not go in for

school-treats and tea-drinkings ; but he is generally to the front on a collection Sunday, or when a national Thanksgiving or other exceptional event demands something out of the ordinary grooves and ruts. The literary parson is eminently free from ruts, and will bear printing. The stock curate is often open to the suspicion of thirteen-penny-halfpenny "sermons in stone."

It was some such literary cleric I determined to "do"; but in order that my lucubrations might not be too advanced for ordinary sympathies, I avoided Mr. Stopford Brooke's afternoon lecture at York Chapel on "Theology in Shelley," and determined to visit another of those *foci* of the lettered parson, Berkeley Chapel, where the Rev. T. Teignmouth Shore, a clergyman whose literature is duly tempered with ecclesiasticism, had recently made his *début*. Mr. Shore won better than golden opinions—viz., gold medals at Trinity College, Dublin—for English composition and oratory ; has since, for reasons best known to himself, exchanged his Hibernian degree for an *ad eundem* Oxford M.A. ; has wielded the pen successfully in many departments of literature, and now fills the editorial chair of the *Quiver* in Messrs. Cassell's giant establishment at Belle Sauvage Yard, E.C. But Mr. Shore has never been "Bohemian" to the extent of merging the cleric in the *littérateur*. He has, I believe, always preserved the odour of sanctity by retaining parochial

work in connexion with his literary labours. He was senior curate to Archdeacon Sinclair at Kensington for a time, but disappeared suddenly beneath the horizon, greatly to the regret of the congregation. He then worked up the Church of St. Mildred, Lee, Blackheath ; and eventually, through the munificence of a private patron who recognised his ability, and was not staggered at his literary proclivities, was presented to the incumbency of Berkeley Chapel, a place of worship in the very heart of fashionable London. But, alas ! the antecedents of Berkeley Chapel have not been so happy as those of its present incumbent. For many years it has been "in the market," and the price asked for this piece of preferment has been such as to scare aspiring parsons, insomuch that I know it to be a fact that, in answering the advertisements of ecclesiastical "agents" for Episcopal chapels, many a clergyman has, to avoid unnecessary correspondence, declared himself at the outset ready to treat, provided always the position were *not* Berkeley Chapel. A series of unsatisfactory incumbents lowered what ought to have been a sort of clerical Paradise to the very abyss ; it being reserved for an ex-colonial prelate to complete the *facilis descensus*. It seemed a hopeless task to rescue Berkeley Chapel from its low estate ; but Mr. Shore set himself with characteristic and commendable energy thereto.

When I visited this fane, some three or four

weeks after Mr. Shore's instalment, I was struck first of all by the "downy" aspect of the place. A cheerful fire was burning in a stove placed right in the centre of the middle aisle, which was carpeted with cozy Brussels. The front row of the galleries looked like a series of pulpits, for there were three or four pulpy-looking cushions in each, with tassels hanging over the front, tempting the occupants of the seats to pound them. The pews in the body of the chapel had been so evidently and so recently cut down some three feet that the basement gave one the idea of a man with his hair cropped, or a sheep a day or two after shearing. In fact, some of the old pews remained, in the side aisles under the windows, of primitive height, and with curtain rods like the tester of a four-post bed round them, but the drapery removed. Here, at least, was a reminiscence of the "Devotion made easy," which characterized the dear soporiferous old times of one's boyhood. It was, perhaps, the last lingering relic in fashionable London ; but even Berkeley Chapel was yielding to the genius of the age. The chancel, since last I saw it, had been raised several gradual paces, and Minton's tiles, which cover a multitude of sins, like charity, bedecked its floor. The east wall was polychromous, and the Commandments things of the past, as though the venerable old Conventicle had outgrown the Decalogue. The pulpit, once white as a Jewish sepulchre, blazed in flatted colours and

gilt; and the organ had walked, like Aladdin's Palace or furniture at a spirit-séance, from the three-story gallery at the west end to a position behind the choir at the east. The tiny altar was overdressed, like a little old lady in a red velvet gown; and a mixed choir of ladies and gentlemen were squeezed into the apology for a chancel, in an awkward corner of which stood also a lectern. Berkeley Chapel tried hard to be picturesque under difficulties.

At half-past eleven—the easy hour at which Berkeley Square begins its devotions—Mr. Shore entered, gorgeous in Oxford hood and tiny black stole, preceded by O! such a funny little old gentleman in a green wig, and scarf half a yard broad, who seemed to represent the genius of the chapel itself in its earliest times. He took the first part of the service in a feeble twitter, and the choir responded musically according to the “use” of Helmore, with an organ accompaniment. The Psalms were chanted to a separate Anglican chant for each; and it was quite evident that the old gentleman who officiated had not had any Valentines that year, for he gave out the 15th instead of the 16th morning of the month, and made Mr. Shore look very uncomfortable by so doing. The congregation was small and evidently aristocratic, far too much so, indeed, to be thrown out by any such trifling *contretemps*. Mr. Shore read the Lessons. The first was the

difficult one of the Fall, in Genesis iii. He read it rapidly, and rather as though he was glad to get over it; but in the second, which contained the account of the Last Supper, he displayed considerable pathos without the slightest theatrical effect. The funny little gentleman "gave out" the Collect for "Sexagesima Sunday, or the second before Lent," like a parish clerk. A rather "high" hymn was sung from the "Ancient and Modern" collection, commencing "The Church's one foundation," and speaking of the Establishment by the feminine personal pronoun all through. In it, too, occurred the significant stanza which seemed to say Berkeley Chapel was "looking up:"—

"Though with a scornful wonder
Men see her sore opprest,
By schisms rent asunder,
By heresies distrest;
Yet saints their watch are keeping;
Their cry goes up, 'How long?'
And soon the night of weeping
Shall be the morn of song."

By way of making it a "morn of song" at Berkeley Chapel, Mr. Shore proceeded to intone the Litany, the responses to which were made in *unison* by the choir to organ accompaniment; a needless waste of strength, it seemed to me, as the ladies and gentlemen were quite equal to harmony. The hymn "O Paradise" followed, sung to the former and less satisfactory tune in "Hymns Ancient and Modern."

Next came the sermon, which, I honestly confess, was what I had come to hear and report.

Mounting the polychromous pulpit, in surplice, stole, and hood, as before, Mr. Shore, without premonitory collect, gave out as his text the words from St. Matthew xiii. 31—33: “The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed which a man took and sowed in his field; which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. . . . The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened.”

No subject, said the preacher, did the Master oftener dwell on than the nature of the kingdom which was to bear His name. He explained it by all kinds of parable and illustration; and there could scarcely be two more dissimilar than those quoted; one referring to an outward visible progress, and the other to an inward, intangible, invisible, subtle influence. There was something to be learnt as to the nature of the kingdom from the very dissimilarity of the allegories. There was a lesson in each separately, and another in their juxtaposition.

Looking back by the light of Church History we could not but be struck to see how the little seed became a great tree, whereto the nations of the earth flocked for shelter. The fact of success argued the

Divine nature of Christ's religion. Everything was opposed to it. Over against the selfishness of the heathen world stood the Christian doctrine of self-sacrifice. Christianity came to the intellect of Greece, and told it there was something greater than intellect in man; and yet, when Paul preached in Athens, there was not a man in tattered tunic or with brodered sandal but felt that he spoke with a power not of this world, and taught a morality purer and diviner than any they could learn in the schools of their philosophers. So, too, with regard to the brute force of Rome. Christianity, first flung to the beasts, came to wear the diadem of the Cæsars. It never pandered to the vices of heathenism; nay, it opposed all that was dearest to it. A fiercer opposition to Christianity came from the Jew. He looked for a temporal ruler to bring back the splendour of the old traditional faith, and drive Rome from the dearly-loved land; but instead of this the Jew found One who "was led as a lamb to the slaughter." He looked for an exclusive Messiah, but Jesus of Nazareth opposed exclusiveness. All was against Christianity: and yet she triumphed over the prestige of Judaism as over the intellect of Greece and the brute force of Rome. The cry of Divine agony that came from those pale lips beneath the awful shadow of the crown of thorns, shattered for ever her altar, and rent the vail of Jewish exclusiveness; and ever since, for eighteen centuries, the tide of suffering humanity

has flowed in above that prostrate altar and through that torn vail, and broken with its surf of sorrow upon the very footsteps of the Throne of God. How could we explain the historic marvel of this growth? Only by another aspect revealed in the Parable of the Leaven.

There was nothing outwardly to account for it. Twelve men, only two or three of whom were educated, and none of whom had any social or political influence, effected this miracle. There was no appeal to processes by which other creeds had grown. We must look for it in the leaven that worked in their hearts. The Divine Power was greater than the opposing forces, as spirit is more potent than matter. It was greater than prejudice, greater than intellect, greater than material force. What, in a word, he asked, was the essence of Christianity? What, "in cant phrase," was the "one thing needful"? Some say it is a particular church system; some a creed or shibboleth. Turn to the history of the early Christians, and we find the one thing represented by the leaven was faith. "One's almost afraid," he added, "to use the word. It is just as though you should take a leaf from a tree, and put it between the pages of a book. Years after, you would find only the dry and dusty skeleton of what was once so full of life. So faith has had all the life crushed out of it by ponderous volumes of theology, in which it has been discussed. To us it means now too often the

cry of a party, or the standard of a sect. To an Apostle it meant personal trust in Christ, absorption of will in His. It was no mere assent to intellectual propositions. It was a deathless trust in Christ the Saviour; and this was the secret of success in early teachers."

Mr. Shore then proceeded to draw two practical lessons. First, this was still the best defence of Christianity. People told us of their difficulty in believing miracles. But what was this compared with the huge difficulty of believing that the world was converted by twelve men *without* Divine help—basing a pure morality on lies? "I could believe any miracle, in or out of the Bible, sooner than that twelve impostors went about—living the purest lives—teaching the noblest morality, and basing it all upon what they knew to be false.

The second lesson was that, now as then, the progress of the leaven in individual hearts was still the condition of the Church's success. If she was to transform national and political life it would be outwardly in direct proportion to the influence existing in the heart.

"Try," he concluded, "to let the God-given leaven leaven the whole man, not only one day in the week or at religious services, but always and everywhere. We have heard too much of outward ceremonies, forms of words, Bible and Prayer Book and Sundays. We want the whole man—every faculty, intellect as

well as soul—pressed into God's service. We want everything consecrated by being done for God's sake, and in God's name. If Christianity is to triumph, it will be when such Christians—not Sunday Christians or Bible Christians, but Christian men and women, consecrate all their work by doing it in the spirit of our Lord. Then the Church will fulfil her high and holy mission. Then she will rise to something of the dignity of her true position. Then she will be no longer the scorn of the infidel, or the tool of the politician, but the Bride of Christ, passing on from victory to victory only to lay all her spoils at the Feet of Him who has redeemed her with His blood."

Berkeley Chapel has had much to bear, and may seem to have entered on a quasi-Millennial era. I question if the walls have ever echoed to a better sermon. At least it has entered on a respectable condition of existence both in a social and intellectual sense. Let us hope that the good time so long coming has come, that Mr. Shore may be the leaven to leaven this long unfermenting edifice, and that it may not be said of Berkeley Chapel as of Trafalgar Square, that one of the finest sites in Europe is being wasted.

MR. LLEWELYN DAVIES AT CHRIST
CHURCH, MARYLEBONE.

It is, perhaps, inevitable that there should be in a movement like that of the Broad Church party in the Church of England an element which shall seem destructive, and wear the aspect of aggression. It is the case with all influences which break in upon routine and ruffle the calm of the established order of things. Even the Tractarian and Ritualistic movements may be viewed in such a light if taken from their point of antagonism to the Protestant position; but these systems are to a great degree dogmatic, and therefore, apparently at least, affirmative and constructive, if not altogether conservative. The Broad Church position, however, being really eclectic, though termed by its male critics latitudinarian, and by old ladies "infidel," does, no doubt, contain an element of negation in that it protests against the dogmas of all system—notably those of Protestantism itself—being regarded as exhaustive of truth. And this *quasi*-destructive element has grown around both poles of thought. The advanced Broad Churchman of to-day differs as widely from the conservative Broad Churchman of some years

ago as the pronounced Ritualist from the original and undeveloped Tractarian. It is in the nature of some minds, and so of the schools they influence, to become arrested at a certain point in any inquiry, beyond which the bolder spirits push recklessly on, while these more cautious ones pause and become fossilized, as has always been the tendency in such cases since the days of Lot's wife.

Rightly or wrongly, I had got to associate the well-known name of the Rev. J. Llewelyn Davies with this conservative Broad Churchmanship. I remember the time when Mr. Davies was thought "dreadful"—the epithet Mesdames Partington and Grundy always attach to advanced opinions of any kind. I am amused to remember why it was those venerable ladies were so scandalized in Mr. Davies's particular case. In those ancient days, before Essays and Reviews were born, or Bishop Colenso thought of, it was deemed worldly to wear a beard, and Mr. Davies ventured to assume to himself that hirsute adornment of manhood. Thereat the said ladies waxed wroth, and spread abroad—as their sex is so capable of doing—what I have no doubt was an egregious *canard* in reference to a former Bishop of London and Mr. Davies's beard. It was proposed to hold a Confirmation at Christ Church, but his lordship declined to officiate unless the Rector shaved! I beg it to be distinctly understood that I only give this anecdote on the authority of my revered friend

Mrs. Grundy. But, just as they say of the Apocryphal Gospels—even if they are not canonical, they are interesting as showing something of the opinions held at an early age of Church History ; so Mrs. Grundy's legend about Mr. Davies's beard is interesting under the same aspect—viz., as showing what monstrous opinions could be entertained in an incipient era of Broad Churchmanship. Now, when a man's orthodoxy may almost be measured by the length of his beard—unless he is very correct, and shaves clean—and when none but fashionable Evangelicals nurse shoulder-of-mutton whiskers, it seems incredible that even the fertile imagination of the old lady could have invented such a myth as that of the Bishop of London and Mr. Davies's beard. Mr. Davies's beard is now—I am sure he will excuse my saying it—beginning to look grizzled, and he sees the “movement” he was one of the first to inaugurate almost universal among his clerical brethren : sees how they have outstripped him, both in hirsute adornments and in the doctrines they were then supposed to symbolize.

To Mr. Davies's church, then, I went on Quinquagesima Sunday, in the hope of finding my model man of the more primitive Broad Church school, as a geologist, if he did not know his labour would be in vain, might search for fossils in the primary strata. Mr. Haweis had been what we might describe in the same language as a “later deposit.” Christ Church,

Lisson-grove, is a huge old-fashioned London parish church, standing in an unfragrant neighbourhood near the Edgware-road station of the Metropolitan Railway. It is strange into what apparently uncongenial latitudes fate seems to cast parsons. Here was a ripe scholar and former Fellow of Trinity, Cambridge, pitchforked into one of the least desirable situations of West London, for Lisson Grove must be baptized strictly on the principle of *lucus a non lucendo*. There is no grove around Christ Church, and the neighbouring streets and alleys—among them notably James Street—are laid down to the sale of semi-stale fried fish, cretaceous sweets, and photographs of a ghastly and half spirit-like character. Rows of little brass bell-handles, one above the other, decorate the doorposts, and *sages femmes* there “do congregate,” apparently out of all proportion to any increasing population. The old Marylebone Theatre is hard by; and marvellous penny exhibitions of distorted babies and fat ladies invite the wonder of the little pagans of the Grove. But the temple is doing its quiet work among those same little pagans. Not only is Mr. Davies an active member of the School Board bent on reclaiming those little heathens from their wanderings in the Grove, but go where you will in this unsavoury metropolitan parish you find the name of “the Rector” spoken of familiarly as one seldom hears it in London, but constantly finds it in a country

parish. The Rector is recognised as an entity, and as a centre of influence. Christ Church I found had, like the rest, "developed" from the condition of pristine ugliness in which I had last seen it, so that when I entered from the east end alongside the chancel I scarcely recognised the place. I remember years ago going to hear Canon, then Mr. Kingsley preach, and found all "flat" except the sermon. Now, however, the chancel was stalled for a choir and raised, so that I was on quite a different level when I came in. I fancy the ritualistic condition of a church might almost be gauged by the height the sacarium is raised above the nave. A moderate and essentially middle-class congregation had begun to gather, and was straggling sparsely over the miles of pew in the body of the church and obtrusive galleries, which seemed able to hold the whole of Lisson Grove on an emergency. No such crisis occurred during that morning. Good, sober, old John-Bull people, with their wives and families, kept dropping in and bolting themselves securely within the high-backed pews, which had only partially succumbed to modern tendencies by being cut down a little. Another test of adaptation is the height of the pew. One is about up to the neck in those at Christ Church, Lisson Grove. Those sturdy *patres familiarum* would evidently object to anything in the shape of an "innovation;" in fact, everything was so conservative at Christ Church that the pew,

opener, who was arrayed in the ordinary russet gown and dismantled bonnet of James Street, rather looked on me as an intruder, I think ; for, despite my white tie, which generally carries weight with such officials, she put me into a side pew nearly out of sight and quite out of hearing of the pulpit, where a lot of other people, and especially one awe-stricken but painfully polite little girl, prevented me from taking my notes in peace and comfort. This arrangement was more unnecessary, as there were acres of room in the church. So I think stray parsons must be looked on as interlopers, and thus tacitly recommended to stick to their own church. Of the other adornments of the place I need not say more than that the elevated chancel was paved with the inevitable Minton, and the altar richly draped with velvet ; but the Ten Commandments stood full in the centre, flanked by the Creed and Lord's Prayer in fullest conservative fashion. The pulpit was of the orthodox tumbler-glass kind, which makes you wonder why the position of the centre of gravity does not necessitate its tumbling over, and calculate what harm it would do the orator to fall from such a height. There was, however, a gorgeous hanging of red velvet in place of a cushion, to match the altar, and with an intricate cross beautifully embroidered upon it. That was nearly all I could see from my retired position, though I craned my neck to catch a glimpse until,

I fancy, the polite little girl, who kept plying me with sacred literature, thought I was practising for an acrobat.

At eleven o'clock soft music commenced, and a quaint effect was produced by two surpliced processions simultaneously entering the church at its extreme ends, and walking towards each other as though they were white dragoons advancing to the attack. From the east, behind the altar, came the clergy, preceded by a beadle with an aggressive-looking mace; and from the west a surpliced choir. They met in the centre by a brass lectern, and thence filed into their positions in the sacrarium.

Mr. Davies's curate was one of those disappointing men who, being of stalwart proportions, lead one to expect a *basso profundo* voice, but who treat one instead to a feeble falsetto. The prayers, as far as he was concerned, were read; and though his voice was singularly clear, only its feeble echoes reached me in my hermit cell. Perhaps that was why it seemed so thin and weak. The responses were sung to an accompaniment, and the Psalms chanted. I even noticed that more favoured pews than mine had printed lists of the music arranged for the whole month; and this it was, no doubt, which produced what I so seldom find in my ecclesiastical wanderings, an agreeable consentaneity of the hymns with the rest of the service. Too often they seem taken at haphazard. I really hope my presence has

no magnetic or mesmeric effect in making curates give out the wrong psalms; but just as on the previous Sunday the old gentleman had done at Berkeley Chapel, so this thin-voiced young gentleman at Christ Church threw everything into confusion by announcing the twenty-sixth morning of the month instead of the twenty-third. It seems like going back to an unlettered age to give these things out at all; and yet one constantly finds it done, even where notices are freely circulated in the pews, especially in the case of an impending collection. After the second lesson, a number of banns were published by the Rector; and I could not help thinking (though I suppose Mrs. G. would say it was "wrong") that if I wanted to marry on the sly, I should like to have the interesting fact of the approaching ceremony announced at Christ Church, and any dissentient relative of the bride-elect located where I was. I heard nothing but the "bachelors" and "spinsters." All faced due east at the Creed, and bowed reverently at the sacred name; and a somewhat ludicrous effect was produced by the organist accompanying the Creed on a single high note with a stop which made it shrill as a railway whistle. I am aware this is done to prevent the choir losing the pitch; but I would humbly suggest a little softening down. It was quite a relief to the ear when we subsided into harmony at the final "Amen." We went on straight to the Litany after

the third collect, thereby losing the chance of utilizing our really good choir for an additional hymn. This was a pity; for the sermon was a little heavy and would have borne more music. The Litany itself was read, but the responses sung to an accompaniment. It was well done on the whole, but dragged. The congregation was not up to the responses—at least, the male portion. The ladies sang the tune, but the *patres familiarum* growled under the impression they were singing bass; just as an evangelical lady always sings in consecutive thirds to the air, and terms it “singing second.” It is, I believe, an article of religion with puritanical ladies to do this. Mr. Davies read the ante-Communion Service, and then, the choir having sung hymn 333 from the ubiquitous “Ancient and Modern Collection,” the clergy left the altar, and Mr. Davies retired to the vestry, re-appearing soon after in conservative black gown and cassock, and got up into the tumbler-glass pulpit. I looked anxiously for bands under the historic beard, but there were none.

The text was taken from 1 Thessalonians iii. 12: “The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another and toward all men.” The discourse was little more than a moral essay, or at most a homily. It was evidently meant to be no more; but was scholarly and practical, and listened to with marked attention, though not with the overstrained anxiety and parentheses of pent-up coughs that

accompany the inflated utterances of favourite "divines." As to coughs, the little semi-pagan school-children, who were dangling between earth and heaven somewhere up about the apex of the organ, seemed to be universally affected with asthma or croup, and coughed without ceasing. "On this day, Christian brethren," said the preacher, "love was commended to our admiration; and it was a great thing to be said of love that it commands the general approval and assent of mankind. It was an emotion which was most useful to the world. It included all virtues, and guaranteed fellowship with God, for we were told that 'God is Love.' Love, therefore, according to the Christian doctrine, secured holiness. We were told to be holy, as He is holy." One of the first things taught us about love, was that it was *the gift of God*. As such we can but pray for it, as, he trusted, they had prayed that morning in reciting the collect for Quinquagesima Sunday. The more we simply confessed love to be the gift of God, the more likely we were to have it. We could not too thoroughly believe that we were dependent on God's grace. Such faith would be proved by inward tests; and no gift was so much to be desired as this gift of love. "Do you believe this?" he asked. "Then pray to God for this most precious of His gifts." But then, he went on to say, prayer is the "Godward aspect of labour." So it was that St. Paul said, "Follow after charity." But how could we confess

this to be the gift of God, and yet strive to attain to it? This was a mystery to be solved only by the experiences of life; but our whole relation to God was of this inexplicable character. It came to be natural to us to pray as if we could do nothing, and at the same time to act as if we could do everything. Another difficulty which could not thus easily be put aside was, Can we increase love by effort? Was it not a gift? Without making difficulties, thoughts like these would, he said, occur. Love was drawn out by some object that we deemed lovable. The most genuine love was the least self-conscious. Was it wholesome, then, to try to love what we ought to love? He would answer thus: that charity was in this sense to be followed, not directly, but indirectly. It was possible to resolve on certain modes of following love. For instance, we might studiously fix our minds on what was most lovable, such as the grace of God, and then whatever in man reflected this grace. To the first Christians the preaching of this love of God which culminated in the voluntary self-sacrifice of Christ, eclipsed everything else. This reconciliation drew out the affection of man to God more than anything. The act of creation was nothing on God's part compared with the giving up His Son to live as a servant and die as a malefactor. If this death of Christ could be brought home to thoughtful minds, it must touch them, and so kindle a genuine devotion. As men's thoughts were fixed

on the Cross, their hearts become softer and their lives less selfish. It had been said that nature revealed the goodness of God ; but nature was not exclusively beneficent. There were destructive forces at work in it. We might, from nature alone, doubt whether the Creator was perfectly good. We might be perplexed by social ills ; but in Christ on the Cross we see heavenly love put forth with an emphasis that carries all before it. Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. In loving God the Father, then, we were led to love man, our brother, also. Let us fix our attention on what was best in man. Let us remember what was good and great in the ages past. Let us look forward to the glory that shall be revealed. Look, he repeated, at what is good in man ; not at the sins and follies which keep the world back. A second mode of following charity was *practising ourselves in kind actions*. There was, he urged, nothing unnatural in the discipline of doing our best to those around us. Those who did kindness grew more kindly. Men were ever wont to hate those whom they had injured, and to love those whom they had benefited. Efforts to relieve those in necessity had, in point of fact, come to monopolize the name of "charity ;" and one of the saddest things in our experience was that efforts to relieve the poor constantly brought out in them mendicancy and deceit ; so that people got to think they must harden their hearts to a tale of woe. It

was, however, firmness, not hardness, that was required. The desire to do good might often be disappointed ; still we must not harden our hearts. But there was an old saying, that charity began at home ; and it might even be necessary to remind those who had just used the Quinquagesima collect that forbearance was often necessary at home. It was not difficult to be pleasant to one's friends ; but it was difficult to get on with the uncongenial : and it was in such discipline as this Christians should exercise themselves. True, there was no respect of persons with God, or those who were most like God, most truly His children. They held themselves bound to honour all men ; but still, in another sense, there was "respect for persons." They respected every person. Thirdly, this love needed protection. There were hostile influences from which love needed to be shielded. For instance, there were continually occurring petty incidents calculated to interrupt harmony. A word or a look might give offence, and thence might spring up resentment. Was it too much to ask that such should be avoided ? Nothing was needed beyond a little self-control. "You," he said, "young or old, who desire to follow after Christian love, can keep watch over your tongues ; can suppress the look or tone of defiance ; can beware of the first symptoms of anger." A more subtle influence still was self-indulgence. If any loved the world, it had been said, the love of the Father was

not in him. Those who loved the world and tried to combine with it the love of God found such to be not incompatible with a certain good nature, but fatal to anything like self-sacrifice. This demanded a labour which the self-indulgent were unable to render. On the whole, we might encourage ourselves in the conviction that there was no insignificant aid to love in watchfulness. It was not in vain to keep watch over the doors of our life, and what goes out and comes in at them. These were the methods he suggested—Contemplation, Practice, and Defensive Watchfulness; not forgetting that love was God's gift, nor, on the other hand, neglecting to put ourselves in the way of the gift.

Such a season as Lent, he said—and I pricked up my ears to hear the Broad Church deliver itself thereanent—was designed for this purpose, to aid efforts for the attainment of Christian love. Some of the traditional language as to the observance of Lent might cause a stumbling-block, such as the advice to suspend all relaxation for so long a time, or the discipline of fasting. Many were far from believing in that discipline; but a season of contemplation, practice, and watchfulness, in respect of Christian charity, might bring a blessing with it. If Christian love could possibly be made more energetic, what would we not do to compass such an end? “Do”—such was the purport of the peroration—“whatever

God shows you to be most conducive to such an issue."

A little jog-trot perhaps, and savouring of the idea that Lisson Grove was a grove indeed, and its pagans true to the etymology of that name; but suited still to the *genius loci*. A destructive criticism would certainly not have suited those pews of Tory-looking *patres familiarum*. Frothy eloquence they were, I am sure, far too sensible to stand. "The Rector" was evidently—true to *his* name too—the right man in the right place.

So, ere these lines saw the light, Carnival was over, our pancakes eaten, our annual banquet of unascetic salt-fish discussed, and we were landed in Lent. It is a season greatly to be desired by the student of ecclesiastical development. We may have to take our parsons no longer singly, but in groups or bouquets. The world of Orthodox London was before us where to choose our place of rest, and we laid in a goodly stock of note-books and pencils for chronicling the salient features of the Lent of 1873.

LENTEN EXERCISES, 1873.

I

It will, I suppose, be taken in evidence of my fallen nature if I confess that I have rather a prejudice against Lent. I am not a Sybarite. I am quite sure most of us eat and drink a good deal more than is necessary, burn too many coals, and run up tailors' and milliners' bills that would bear considerable taxing at the hands of Cato the Censor. I should like on all accounts to curtail, and consequently to deny myself, but I like to do it as a reasonable being. I do not like to be told when I am to deny myself, or how, any more than I care to be dictated to as to how, when, and why I should exercise any of the cardinal virtues. Consequently, if I practise the regimen of abstinence, and go in for a dinner of fish and vegetables (of both of which, by the way, I am particularly fond), I do it studiously on Tuesday and Thursday, or Saturday and Monday, any days except Wednesday and Friday. If I wanted to perform an act of stomachic heroism, I would refrain from plum-pudding on Christmas Day, or green fat on the Ninth of November; but I object to eat salt-fish on Ash Wednesday or Good Friday. The former I consider

as a purely ecclesiastical arrangement ; the latter as an observance at once grossly material and unworthy of the great event commemorated. Death I can never concede to be a gloomy event. It was to the heathen, but to the Christian it is simply the birth into new life. That death which, cruel as it was, closed in on Calvary the more cruel life of the Man of Sorrows, I cannot consider an event to be mourned over ; if I did, I should not eat salt-fish to show my sorrow. In fact, I can recall from the records of my experience one or two sorrow seasons—not many, thank God—and I never recollect feeling a better appetite than when the cloud was at its darkest. It was as though the physical life needed more than usual building up to repair its unwonted waste. It was dreadfully unromantic, I know ; but it was the case ; and I strongly object to being told when, and why, and how I am to be sorry for my sins. I hold strongly that the heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with its joy.

But then I am resolved to be appreciative ; I cannot repeat that fact too often, for good resolutions gain by repetition. I don't wear black clothes at Passion-tide, or ask my director for a Lent Dietary ; but I try to enter into the feelings of those people who do. Just for contrariety's sake, I suppose, I usually go to church less frequently than usual in Lent. This year I went regularly—or, rather, irregularly—at frequent intervals to all sorts of different churches, but all

strictly orthodox—i.e., all, from Clapham to Pimlico, within the pale of the Church of England, “as by law established,” so as to note the manners and customs of those whom I met there.

My principal objection to Ash Wednesday, I frankly confess, is based on the Commination Service. In the case of that service, as in that of the Athanasian Creed, I have a decided objection against coming to church to be cursed and sworn at. I have an idea that the purpose in coming thither is so far, far different. I seem to hear enough of cursing outside the church door. In fact, I can follow Dr. Watts well enough when he says, “Church is a little heaven below; I have been there, and still would go;” only I must supplement the sacred with the secular bard, and quote Tom Hood’s words from the terrible satire, the “Ode to Rae Wilson :”—

“ Yet am I none of those who think it odd
A man can pray unbidden from the cassock,
And, passing by the customary hassock,
Kneel down remote upon the simple sod,
And sue *in formâ pauperis* to God.”

Therefore I often spend my Ash Wednesday amid the breezes of Hampstead Heath or the catkins in Caen Wood, and do my penitence when my fellow-sinners feast. But this year I was keeping Lent like a Ritualist.

Still, I frankly say I did not go to church on the morning of Ash Wednesday. I will be more candid

still, and own the soft impeachment of having had breakfast in bed. I saved myself up for the evening, when the Rev. Orby Shipley was to commence a course of lectures at the now famous Ritualistic Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Paddington, on the appropriate, if not cheering, subject of "The Seven Deadly Sins." That might make up for the Communion Service I meant to avoid.

Meant but did not succeed! The Rev. Richard Temple West was one too many for me, and laid on the damnatory service in the evening! An old gentleman reminded us (on G.) of "the godly discipline of open penance which existed in the Primitive Church . . . instead whereof (until the said discipline may be restored)" he begged us to "affirm with our own mouths the curse of God." We did so; and afterwards Mr. West sang the "Miserere" to perfection, his choir taking alternate verses, melodiously enough, though not nearly as effectively as their minister. If one is to be cursed at all, it is as well to have the maledictions melodious; and nothing could have been more so than the doleful Psalm li., sung, I believe I am right in saying, to the musical *Tonus Angelorum* in Mr. West's sweet tenor. The people chanted the Deprecation, "Turn us, O Lord," &c., in a descending chromatic, and, after a hymn, Mr. Orby Shipley ascended the pulpit, and began his lecture on the Seven Deadly Sins.

As I came to church through the semi-respectable

Paddington streets where St. Mary Magdalene's is located, I looked about me for signs of deadly sinners coming to be lectured, and saw through the mists which skirted the canal tall forms swathed in clerical cloaks and crowned with ecclesiastical wide-awakes. These I knew to be "priests;" and I could not consider them deadly sinners, of course. Ladies in their chastened lenten attire were going along by files and columns, and the stained glass windows threw out into the darkness gorgeous pictures of pale-faced saints. Where were the sinners? In the church it was still the same. They all looked so good, and clean, and respectable, that I should have fancied, had I not been accustomed to dive a little below the surface, there were few there who would take an interest in Deadly Sin.

The first on Mr. Orby Shipley's list was Pride, and then it occurred to me that even Paddington might not be without its Deadly Sin. For over an hour did the preacher stand in the pulpit with his bulky MS. held at arm's length, and descant to his listeners on the different sorts of pride. He has a sharply-cut, ascetic—almost monastic—face, and the sermon was clear, forcible, and logical, but sadly too long. Before it was over about an eighth of the congregation had oozed away; and that fraction, will it be believed, consisted entirely of ladies. I did not see a man stir! It is generally calculated (in fact, I saw it stated in a statistical work on religious de-

nominations) that one Dissenter does as much church-going work as six Churchmen, and I had fancied that one lady was about equal to six males in either denomination. Be that as it may, the ladies went off, and the gentlemen stopped to hear Mr. Shipley. Possibly there are more male Deadly Sinners than female. Some of them went to sleep, I own, but they stopped.

On the Friday succeeding Ash Wednesday I varied proceedings by going to hear Bach's "Passion Music," according to St. John, at St. Anne's, Soho. The experiment of producing the kindred work according to St. Matthew, by the same composer, had, I was aware, been tried by Dean Stanley with great results at Westminster Abbey; but, as far as I knew, this was the first attempt to do the same in a parish church; and I wanted to see how Soho would stand fifes and fiddles in church—for a full orchestra was to accompany the music. I had been accustomed to this in my clerical infancy, for in my little hamlet cure we had every sort of unecclesiastical instrument short of a drum; but I had never seen it in London except at a Roman Catholic Church, and once at St. Alban's, Holborn, which, the old ladies tell me, is "next door" to Rome. I certainly was not prepared for what I did see at Canon Wade's church, for the band as well as the choir wore surplices, and it very nearly disturbed my centre of gravity when I saw fiddles being carried up the nave in procession by

gentlemen in surplices. I know no sort of reason why a fiddle should look dissipated or incongruous with a surplice any more than a flute. I only know it does. Mr. Pettitt, the violoncellist, looked drolly self-conscious when he sat him down white-robed to his instrument; but the acme was reached when a bulky gentleman hard by flew at a double bass, and tried to look unconcernedly at the conductor, who stood, *bâton* in hand and surpliced too, in the centre of the chancel; the choir, about seventy in number, being ranged around him in the stalls, and the band behind and east of the singers. The effect was very chaste and beautiful when one saw the whole of the white-vested minstrels massed in the chancel of the fine old parish church. A large middle-class congregation filled every portion of the nave, aisles, and galleries, and, by an excellent arrangement, every member of the vast assemblage was provided with a book of the words, with the chorales annotated, and a request added that they would join in them.

A shortened form of evening service was intoned by Canon Wade, the responses being given with organ accompaniment. There were a single special Psalm and one Lesson appropriate to the occasion; and, after the Third Collect, the first part of the Passion Music was sung. Anything like a criticism of this great musical classic would, of course, be out of place. Suffice it to say, the pathetic narrative of the Passion according to St. John is given in recitative by a tenor

voice, the parts of Christ and Pilate being taken by basses. Nothing could exceed the pathos of such passages as "Jesus, knowing all things that were coming upon Him, said unto them, 'Whom seek ye?'" to which is replied in full chorus, "Jesus of Nazareth!" or "Peter thought upon the word of Jesus, and he went forth and wept bitterly." Then there were at frequent intervals the exquisite chorales, so thoroughly appreciable and intelligible by the Schoites, who, nevertheless, and notwithstanding all the provision that had been made for them, remained mute as mice, or twittered as feebly as some of those small quadrupeds would have done. How Mr. Spurgeon's congregation, or, better still, the Moravians, would sing out those splendid hymns if it were consistent with the genius of their worship to introduce the Passion Music! And why not?

After the first part was over there was a sermon by Bishop Claughton. He took for his text Psalm cxxxvii. 2, in the Bible version: "We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof." The discourse was a brief, telling apology for music as expressive of penitence no less than of joy. "Sing us one of the songs of Zion," said the victors to the captive Jews. And they answered, "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land!" They hanged their harps upon the willows. They put aside all that reminded them of the past, and of their happiness in the beloved land. It might seem as

though music could have no part in sadness. In fact, the whole of this Psalm, as well as the whole Bible, associates music with praise. But it would argue a shallow insight into the depths of our nature if we thought music only compatible with joy. This very Psalm was really a proof to the contrary. It was that these Jews could not bear to express what they felt in song. It would be too cutting. They could not trust themselves to "sing the Lord's song in a strange land." The time came when they did solace themselves thus, as music of an old home often consoles the sorrow-laden. But not then.

It is not, said the Bishop, that we really add to God's glory by our music, or even by our holiness; but whatever brings us nearer to Him is healthful. If we can by the power of music be made to feel the power of the Passion, it does make us more fit for His presence. The Psalm, then, he urged, was no argument against penitential music. Music expressed what we could express in no other way. It might bring us closer to Christ's Passion, and so be consonant with the present penitential season. There was a feature common to music and to painting that it is not always the direct effect which works its intention. It is difficult to make heathens understand man's sin until they are first made to realize God's goodness. So in music there were, he said, some expressions which came out of our own hearts, and, as it were, went back again. The effect

of music was marvellous for good as also for evil. If you only come to criticise, he continued, you may go away none the better, but even the worse for it. It ought to bring you nearer to God, to teach repentance, and not expend itself in mere sentimentality or excitement. You should think not only of Him who died for us, but of yourselves for whose sins He died. Repentance should be quickened by those sounds which go direct to the heart. This is the lesson to carry away to-night. Think of our parts in *making necessary* this death of Christ. Go out with Peter and weep bitterly. Try never again to listen coldly to those solemn words to which you listen so differently to-night.

Then followed the second part of the music. The only drawback was that the gentleman who sang Pilate seemed to have a cold; but I could not quite decide whether this were so or whether he sang huskily to express the wickedness. The climax is reached when the multitude cry out in a studied discord, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Immediately succeeds the sweet *arioso*, with harp and violin accompaniment, "Consider, O my soul, with fearful joy consider, with bitter anguish in thy heart afflicted, thy highest good is Jesus' sorrow. For thee, from the thorns that pierce Him what heavenly flowers spring. Thou canst the sweetest fruit from the wormwood gather. Then look for evermore to Him." Then again in chorus the one significant

word "crucify!" and so to the most melodious and intelligible chorale of all :—

"Thy bonds, O Son of God, most high,
Have perfect freedom brought us;
And free, we to Thy throne come nigh
As Thou by grace hast taught us.
Hadst Thou disdained this bondage sore,
We had been bound for evermore!"

The gem of all, perhaps, would have been the alto solo, "It is finished. Oh, rest for all afflicted spirits," &c., with Mr. Pettitt's magnificent *violoncello obbligato*, but it was entrusted to a boy who was frightened at it. Why should it be more correct to employ boy sopranos and contraltos than ladies? Granted, even, the greater purity of voice, which, personally, I am far from conceding, we cannot expect the same matured taste and expression. A woman, not a child, should have sung that air to its perfect accompaniment, "This night of woe makes me upon my last hour ponder." It would be a pity if a lad *could* realize the intensity of that pathos!

The prayer of St. Chrysostom, and offertory hymn by Barnby, and the Benediction by the Bishop, concluded a service which I should like to see less exceptional in our London churches, and which was repeated each Friday in Lent.

It was, I hope, with a proper feeling of awe and sense of responsibility that I determined to devote the whole of one Sunday in Lent to the "following"

of Church dignitaries. I promised a bouquet of parsons ; and I felt I could not do better than cull my flowers from the very tallest stems. Accordingly, I commenced with an Archdeacon, and attended the morning service at the fine new parish church of St. Mary Abbott's, Kensington, which has risen, Phoenix-like, from the ashes of its exceedingly ugly red-brick predecessor. Outside, the structure is almost like a cathedral ; and if the inside looks a little prim and whitewashy, it is certainly an improvement on former times, when the edifice seemed a very embodiment of the high and dry school of theology.

Rightly or wrongly, people associate Archdeacon Sinclair with this school of thought ; though I can recollect at least one archidiaconal charge from his pen which was in advance of such a position.

His subject on the Sunday I visited the old Court suburb was "Frivolity," and I was very curious to hear what he would say about it. Mounting the pulpit in black silk gown and kid gloves, with voluminous bands, as though to protest against the Bishop's "frivolity," *in re* the surplice, the Archdeacon gave out as his text the not very lively utterance of St. Paul to the Romans (ii. 8, 9), "Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil." Frivolity, he remarked (and here, be it remarked, I am only

culling from the archidiaconal sentences), was the great cause of insensibility to the Divine wrath and indignation. With some people it was the case that they could think of nothing but dissipation and amusement. Their whole life seemed engrossed by it; and they even carried it into the House of God, making their behaviour in church different from that of the rest of the congregation.

Again, there was another class of people who disregarded God because they did not think of His attributes. The student of nature saw God in everything he examined; and most of all when he turned his regards upon himself, so fearfully and wonderfully made; but the frivolous saw nothing of this. Then the Archdeacon pointed out how, in every age, the necessity of Atonement had been evidenced by Sacrifice, Priest, and Altar. In offences against the law of man simple repentance was not sufficient: punishment must follow the violation of law; and so Christ was our one sufficient sacrifice, &c. What the sacrifice cost Him we could see evidenced by the description of the Passion. Though it was a cold winter night, so that they were obliged to have a fire within doors at the High Priest's palace, His sweat was as it were great drops of blood. In conclusion, he begged them not to merit the anguish and tribulation awaiting the soul of them that did evil, but to seek after the glory, honour, and peace that was for those who did good. Leaving early, I managed to

hear Mr. Rowsell, at St. Stephen's, Westbourne Park, demolish about the last fragment of faith this sceptical age has left us—viz., belief in the Devil. He could not realize the idea of a visible Tempter on Quarantaria; and I thought, in his endeavour to keep clear of the Devil, he floundered very nearly on the doctrine of the peccability of Christ's nature. But I have not much head for these matters. I fancy an Archdeacon would say I was too "frivolous."

In the afternoon I was divided between the Archbishop of York at the Chapel Royal, Whitehall, and the Bishop of London at St. James's, Piccadilly. Reserving the former for a future archiepiscopal bouquet, I went and heard Dr. Jackson open a course of lectures on the Parable of the Prodigal Son.

By great good luck—for the congregation was large—I was ushered by a courteous gentleman into the "overseers' " pew—a vast edifice, like the corporation seat in a country town. Surrounded by large cushions and quarto Prayer-books, I felt the *genius loci* fall upon me forthwith. A motherly old gentleman in mittens read prayers in a crisp voice, and the charity children responded somewhere in mid air. Nobody in church uttered a sound, they were much too well bred. Everything was painfully respectable at St. James's, even to the caps of the pew-openers, which bristled with orthodoxy in every little white

bow. There was a refined air even about the free seats. I don't believe a prodigal son would have dared to pass the beadle.

The Bishop took for his text the opening words of the allegory, "A certain man had two sons;" and forthwith "improved" the filial relationship. Deprecating the idea that the parable referred to Jew and Gentile, his lordship plunged at once into details, and pointed out that though we were God's sons "in a certain sense by nature," we were far more truly so by adoption and grace. He then passed on to consider some of the privileges of sonship, which were—(1) Possession of the Father's love. Copious texts were brought forward to prove that parental love was great, but God's love greater. (2) Such adoption brought us into brotherly relation with Christ. (3) Adopted sons of God had the privilege of the Holy Spirit. (4) Adoption involved inheritance in eternity. If these were the privileges, what must be our folly in neglecting them? His lordship concluded "with a few anxious and affectionate words" to his younger friends, who would probably soon be confirmed. The whole discourse was not so much scholarly as scholastic, and was half composed of texts. I am sure, however, that the whole assembly was conservative to the backbone, and enjoyed it thoroughly; and confess to an irreverent endeavour to decide throughout the whole discourse whether a Bishop *ex officio* tries to

write in this style, or whether it "comes natural" under episcopal influences. I must own I missed the pathos of the sweet old allegory, and thought the exposition cold and hard ; but I have no doubt this feeling was due to the fact that I was not "to the manner born" like the congregation at St. James's, Piccadilly.

LENTEN EXERCISES, 1873.

II.

IF it was with a feeling of responsibility that I set me on a recent occasion to chronicle the utterances of an Archdeacon and a Bishop, it may be imagined how awe-stricken I was when I found it incumbent upon me to do the same by a real live Archbishop. But I saw the Primate advertised to preach at St. Mary Woolnoth, Lombard Street, and there was no shirking the duty. The thing had to be done, though it might be with fear and trembling. In these revolutionary days doubt may exist in some ill-regulated minds as to the divinity that doth hedge a king; but the most sceptical could never doubt the divinity that doth hedge an Archbishop.

It is a strange idea to have got abroad, but it is generally considered quite exceptional for a dignitary of the Church to be able to preach. One would fancy it was considered literally *infra dig.* It is quite possible to tell off on one's fingers, without having to use both hands, the names of the "higher clergy" in London who go in for oratory. The fact puts me in mind of a circumstance which occurred within my own knowledge. A choir was being organized; and

a gentleman proposed a friend to the amateur organist as a candidate. "Can he sing?" asked the musical man. "No, he can't sing," was the reply, "but he is such a nice fellow." Of course his qualification for the coveted post was power of singing, not merely being a nice fellow, though that was extremely desirable. And so, too, one would fancy that, *cæteris paribus*, an Archbishop who could preach would be better than one who could not. It would be interesting to collate from the archives of the Primacy statistics of Archbishops of Canterbury to whom the voice of prophecy in this sense had been given. As it was, when I told people, with a sense of importance, that I was going into the City to hear the Archbishop preach, they all smiled, and asked me what I was going to do that for. However, I was not going to be laughed out of my Archbishop. I had made up my mind to go, and I went; and a very good sermon I got. But I must be historical, or I am nothing. I got late to St. Mary Woolnoth's, contrary to my usual custom. But I fancy the general character of City churches, and some individual experiences I had recently gained in one of them, led me to form the idea that there would be plenty of room at St. Mary's. Never was a greater mistake. The whole basement of the fine old church—which seems to look defiance at the Mansion House opposite—was quite full, and there was only standing-room in the galleries. Fancy that for

Lombard Street at one o'clock, P.M. ! It is a fine old edifice, lined throughout with richly-carved black oak of the heaviest character. Spiral pillars flanked the communion-table, which was draped with red velvet, and a perfect crowd of oak cherubim was all around and above it. The Archbishop was kneeling at the north side as I entered, and he seemed indeed to be appropriately enshrined. There was, softly be it spoken, a largish cross on the table, and a faldstool in front showed something of the proclivities of the Rev. Prebendary Irons, D.D., the rector. But City livings and prebendal stalls have a wonderful effect in toning down extremes, and in most respects—notably in its ponderous reading-desk, canopied pulpit, and rubicund parish clerk—St. Mary's was worthy of him who was once its presiding genius, John Newton, of Olney Hymn notoriety. Newton would have wondered what the congregation was about had he entered when I did ; for they were on their knees, chanting the *Miserere* to a Gregorian tone, which, with a few collects, had formed the very appropriate introduction to his Grace's sermon. Lombard Street means business, and cannot afford time for vain repetitions in its liturgy. We could spare some of them elsewhere, too, for the matter of that. At the conclusion of the *Miserere*, the Archbishop entered the pulpit, and again surprised me by reading a "Bidding Prayer," which I could see was lying on the red velvet cushion ready for him,

since I had mounted to the gallery and looked down on the pulpit. The pillars at St. Mary Woolnoth's seem to have been contrived cleverly by the architect for the purpose of being in everybody's light at once. I jammed myself between two, however, and managed to see a little. We were desired to pray for the Archbishops and Bishops, especially the Lord Bishop of London, and for the clergy, particularly those of St. Mary's, for the Lord Mayor, the churchwardens, and the trustees of the charities, as well as for all benefactors. The Lord's Prayer having summed up all these petitions, his Grace produced half a sheet of foolscap paper, on which I saw a few notes scribbled, so that the sermon was to be virtually an extempore one. There seems no reason why it should not be so, since I presume the Archbishop does not speak even from notes in his place in the House of Lords. But in the case of a sermon it seemed to me almost as great a novelty to find the Primate was not going to read as it would have been to my friends and acquaintance to be told he could preach at all.

He had been desired, the Archbishop said, to speak a few words on a definite subject, "The Mind of Christ," and he would take two texts, with that object in view. The first was Phil. ii. 5: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." The second, 1 Cor. ii. 16: "We have the mind of Christ." It was worth remarking, said his Grace,

that there were two different words signifying mind in the original Greek, and a different one was used in each of the two passages quoted as texts. The mind might be the intellect or understanding, or it might be that which is the last to influence the will through the feelings. Now, in the Epistle to the Corinthians, it was asked, "Who hath known the mind of the Lord?" No one knows the mind of God, and Christ is God; therefore, no one knows the mind of Christ. We had heard much of the Athanasian Creed lately, and in that creed there were several statements about the human mind of Christ. It would be wrong to suppose that Christ only had a divine mind because He partook of the Godhead. He had also a human mind. Christ's divine mind was unfathomable, and in that respect we could not rise to an imitation of the mind of Christ; but Christ's human mind was an object for our imitation. This was the highest perfection of human nature after which we could strive—to judge as Christ would have judged, to feel as Christ would have felt, and so to love as Christ would have loved.

To be thus likened to Christ, the preacher went on to say, was to be sanctified. The Holy Spirit bestowed on us the resemblance to the mind of Christ. Let no one think of justification and sanctification only as speculations of the schools. Unless we were justified, we could have little hope in dying. No doubt a man might live respectably without thus

possessing the mind of Christ. Thousands in this city were living so. They might be prosperous without the mind of Christ. Men might be loved in the sphere of their families without realizing the idea of the mind of Christ ; but, in all these cases, the man was respectable, prosperous, or loved, according to a low standard. All his prosperity was limited to this world ; all his respectability based on the ill-formed opinions of his fellow-men. The Archbishop then went on to specify details of this mind of Christ—*e.g.*, humility, spirituality, and unwearied industry ; the last bringing the preacher gracefully round to an appeal for a charitable purpose to which the offertory was to be dedicated that morning. And so the vast throng broke up and was lost in the labyrinths of the City. As I travelled homewards by Metropolitan Railway from Moorgate Street, a lady in a poke bonnet, whom I had seen in church, and who seemed to belong to some ultra-Protestant sisterhood, came up to the window of the carriage where I was sitting, and deliberately threw a handful of tracts in my face, which I, perhaps a little rudely, threw out again without reading. I did not see why, because I had been to hear an archbishop preach, I should be pelted with tracts.

To go from the Archbishop of Canterbury to Father Ignatius is something like proceeding *per saltum* from the sublime to its antipodes ; but my present study continually leads to similar startling contrasts.

I had looked out in the neighbourhood of the agony column in the *Times* to see whether that enterprising gentleman, the Rev. F. Lyne, self-styled "in religion" Father Ignatius, would not improve Lent by coming up from Llanthony to London; and sure enough there I eventually found him. On mid-Lent Sunday he began a series of mission services at Westbourne Hall, to be continued twice during the week at St. George's Hall, and on Sunday at Westbourne Hall again. His prices of admission were high; unreserved seats—of which there was only a limited number—being a shilling, and reserved ones half-a-crown and five shillings. His opening subject was one sure to be interesting in his hands—namely, the influence of Christianity upon society. I adjourned to Westbourne Hall, therefore, on Sunday afternoon, though I hate a post-meridian service; but I thought Ignatius would keep me awake if anybody could. I knew his ways of old. The limited number of shilling seats was full, and the higher priced ones nearly so. The venture, at all events, was a successful one.

The Hall was devoted during the week to Mr. Hamilton's panoramic views of the Brindisi route to the East, and Father Ignatius had selected a very imposing view of St. Peter's at Rome for his background. In front of this was the usual spindle-shanked stump-oration table, with two dips burning, between which a crucifix was afterwards placed by the young monastic gentleman himself, who entered,

laden with this devotional apparatus, clad in his black Benedictine habit, and accompanied by an old gentleman in what seemed like a "property"-clerical dress of very short surplice, with lace about a quarter of a yard deep, and a doctor's hood. The surplice only came down to the knees, and the old gentleman wore no cassock, so that an amount of "leg" was visible, which ought to have brought him under the notice of the Lord Chamberlain. Moreover, he wore coloured "continuations," so that the exhibition was by no means clerical. There were several buxom sisters—I mean ecclesiastical sisters—flitting about the congregation, or the audience; but also, as though to lend a domestic element to the scene, Father Ignatius's sisters after the flesh, as well as his papa and mamma. The choir was composed of his female relatives, so that the entertainment might have been announced as by "The Lyne Family." This must have lessened the outgoings considerably, and no doubt made the net receipts very satisfactory, for the attendance was decidedly large. By what appears to me a grievous mistake, the whole of the afternoon service of the Church of England was read. This I could see was the *raison d'être* of the "property" old gentleman, who droned through prayers and lessons until he nearly sent us all to sleep, for the hall was illuminated only with "a dim," even if not quite "a religious light." In fact, there is to me always a sort of dissipated feeling about these hall

and theatre services. However, we got over it at last, and sang a hymn; Ignatius, after the second verse, stopping to give us a little fillip, saying, "Come, I want something more like congregational singing than that. So I shall give out every verse;" which he did.

Ignatius always makes a great point of his water-bottle and glass, and after duly regaling himself on this occasion, and putting the beverage in a convenient place for renewing his acquaintance, he relieved us from our depression by beginning his part in the ceremony. He commenced with a long extempore prayer, addressed to Christ as Redeemer of the Universe, "and especially of the human race." The prayer was exceedingly eloquent, and the *pose* of the young "monk" as he delivered it a decided success. He then took as his text St. John xv. 19, "I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you;" and, plunging at once *in medias res*, said that the position of Christianity was at this moment the most degrading of any religion in the world. "The dishonesty and truckling expediency of Christianity," he said, for it is a pity to mar his periods, "are a disgrace to common honesty." This woke us all up at once, of course; and he went on to tell us that, compared with Buddhism, Hindooism, and Mahometanism, Christianity showed at a disgraceful disadvantage. It was an insult to common sense. There was not a single Government of Europe

prepared to protect Christianity; but there were, on one side, downright honest attacks on its foundations, and, on the other, insidious plots. They did not as yet burn Bibles, because they saw the Bible had some hold over women; and men so far pondered to their wives and sisters; but soon they would be prepared to do so. In philosophic Germany, Christianity was "on its last legs," and taking the position of a worn-out myth. The King of Spain, too, had said contemptuously that, while he was determined to encourage liberty of thought in men he would still show a certain respect to their wives and daughters by retaining Christianity. If represented by its legislature, England could advance equal claims to be considered an infidel country. Who had the boldest defenders, Jesus Christ or Rationalism? Who would care to face the country as a Christian politician, except for party purposes? We all recollect the scorn with which the House of Commons received the proposal that they should adjourn for Ascension Day, when they adjourned, as a matter of course, to see a few "miserable horses" run the Derby. The preacher then went on to lay down as the essential principle of Christianity, according to Jesus Christ, antagonism to the world. It was to be at sworn enmity with the world, in order to conquer, reform, and regenerate it. "Gentlemen," he continued, merging into a sort of hustings style, "we consider our age scientific, forgetting that Christianity had to

meet philosophers, as well as credulous people, at the outset. When Christianity started on its wildgoose chase (he apologized for the term) it had to face the civilization of Rome, and the philosophy of the 'dreamy East.' Those Buddhist and Confucian systems lived on still, and might be seen in full vitality in Siam and China. There we might see the Buddhist monk dying calmly and in peace as he contemplated the image of his Divine Master. It would be a good thing for you, ladies and gentlemen," Father Ignatius put in, parenthetically, "if you could do the same." Altogether, the preacher showed considerable proclivities towards Buddhism. A "perversion" in that direction might be worthy of his original genius.

What was the material, he asked, with which Christianity had to work against these obstacles? Only a handful of the lowest of the low. God would not stoop to act as man acted. Galilean fishermen had to raise on the ruins of the temples the cross of a "gibbeted" malefactor. Christianity came to tell mankind, in whom the preacher considerably allowed there was "something good," that they were not sprung from the ape or the lotus-flower; that there were not lords many and gods many. It came to announce the Fatherhood of God and the Redemption of Christ. Christianity accomplished its mission in daring the world. The world beat and killed the apostles, but they said, "We ought to obey God rather than men." The Christianity of this nine-

teenth century differed from this—the preacher exquisitely observed—as widely as “*chalk from cheese!*” In those days Christianity did not fear science, as now. On the rude materials of the Goths and Vandals, and the filthy dregs of the Roman Empire, Christianity built up real civilization. Was ours, he asked, doing this? Had our Christianity confidence in its mission? Was it not pandering to the philosophy and science of the nineteenth century? The world asked first an inch, and now an ell; and in the Church of England it had been such an ell that men in the highest positions did not scruple to deny the divinity of Christ. He should like to go to gaol, said this free-spoken preacher, for libel on account of vilifying the man who denies the inspiration of the Bible. (I apprehend Father Ignatius will find no difficulty in attaining his end if he only goes on as he has begun.) He could respect the infidel outside the Church, but not the man who, for the sake of the loaves and fishes, lived by a Gospel he denied. If he—still apostrophizing his ecclesiastical Mrs. Harris—had half the pluck of “Bradlaugh the infidel,” Christianity would not be trammelled as it now was. It was, he repeated, a disgrace to civilization. He could tell off on his fingers dignitaries of the Church whom he would like to place side by side with Bradlaugh, and who would be made respectable by the process. “We are called illiberal,” said he, by way of peroration; “but our principles *shall* be

pandered to. We will not give up one dogma ; we defy the nineteenth century ; we will conquer it by dying, if necessary, rather than allow such men in our Church, who deny the divinity and atonement of Christ. I would lead the van by going to gaol to-morrow for libelling the men who sneer at these doctrines, but have not the courage to deny them boldly. What effect has Christianity on the world ? It is the scorn of the world. Don't talk of philanthropy ; an atheist can build an hospital. 'Whoso offereth me praise he honoureth me ;' and the praise we offer to Christ is to call Him an impostor in our pulpits. If He was not, as He professed to be, 'very God of very God,' He ought to have been hung. He was the most cunning juggler that ever disgraced the human race, and the Christianity of to-day holds out a premium to knavery. We feed and house men to deny the very doctrines on which religion rests."

So came this very highly-spiced sermon to an end—at least one instalment of it, for it was continued on the following Sunday. Its effect, we were told, would have been lost upon us if we did not feel uncomfortable as we went out with the state of things around us.

On the next occasion, his subject was "The Church of England in Retrospect and in Prospect." The Hall was arranged as on the preceding Sunday, except that the crucifix was draped in black ; and before the sermon Father Ignatius made an explana-

tion as to the reason for holding his services in unconsecrated buildings. He said he was prevented by the Bishop of London from officiating in churches in his Diocese, though he was permitted to do so in the Archdiocese of Canterbury. It was necessary, therefore, that he should make a charge for admission. If he were an ordinary clergyman of the Church of England he should charge a pew-rent, which would go to his wife and family. He had no wife and family, and the money collected would go not to himself, but to his work. He took for his text the words, "Will a man rob God?" &c., from Malachi iii. 8, 9. Was not this the accusation, he asked, history made against us? Look at the impropriation of tithes. Nobles lived on them, and were worse than the robbers locked up in gaols. Our county squires were blasphemous enough to sleep in their beds after robbing God. There was a society called the Tithe Redemption Trust, for buying back from the devil what his best servants, Cranmer and Henry VIII., had given him. To be fair, the words of the prophet did not apply to the nation or the Church. He would give place to none in loyalty to our Queen, but the Royal Supremacy had robbed God; and that was the unique act of the God-robber, Henry Tudor, which had brought a blight on the families who owned church lands. He referred specially to the house of Russell to prove this position. The people rose to protect the Church and the poor, which their

grandsires were deluded into calling the glorious Reformation. The curse was the same as that with which God smote the builders of the Tower of Babel. There were 200 sects of Protestants in this land to tear the Bible into shreds, and to disgrace the God of Unity. Three hundred and fifty years ago the Bible was revered by all. There was one Church. The previous disturber of the peace, Wycliffe, was only insignificant; universal harmony was the normal state of things. Separating the Church into body and soul, the Church visible and invisible, he predicated unity of the latter. He met them among Baptists, Irvingites, &c., in so far as they believed in the one great sacrifice. This, he said, was the doctrine of the whole Catholic Church as to the faithful souls. All who so believed were saved, no matter what sect they belonged to. All the invisible Church were saved by anticipation 1800 years ago. Would not any of us rather be one of these, though a despised ranter, than the acutest theologian? As to the outward organization there were three sources of authority—God, the king, and the people. The Dissenter got his from the people. The Church of Rome derived it directly from Christ. Thirdly, the Church of England got hers—it had been said—from Act of Parliament, from Matthew Parker, consecrated by Elizabeth. For 300 years we had nursed this error. This had been the secret of the failure of the Church of England. Instead of coming to men with

the cross, she came with the lion and unicorn. Instead of "Jesus only," she came with the name of Queen Victoria. Liberty and love were the characteristics of the Church before the sixteenth century. There were then no poor-rates or workhouses. The stones of Tintern and Melrose cried out what the Church was in retrospect as the mother of the people and Church of England indeed. Those were days of morality, though the brush of the adulterous libeller had painted black spots upon them. Even Protestant writers had denied the aspersions in succeeding years. The Church of England was not to blame for anything done since her Convocation was fettered, and she had been unable to elect her bishops. There was a pretty turmoil in Bow Church some years ago when a bishop was elected by the Prime Minister against the protest of the people. The Church of England must come back to what she had been. And strangely enough it was the people forcing the clergy to adopt Catholic worship. The churches where the Reformation was most vigorously opposed were those most thronged by wealthy worshippers. He concluded with an eloquent appeal that none would be cowardly enough to leave the Church, even in spite of Acts of Parliament and the Royal Supremacy being her chief corner stones.

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MR. MAGUIRE AT CLERKENWELL.

So far, our studies of representative men in the Church of England have been confined to what we may term the sphere of positive opinions. The Broad Churchman rests on his basis of common sense; the Ritualist relies on the æsthetic element in worship and the sacrificial doctrine in matters of faith; the Evangelical preaches the Gospel, the whole Gospel, and nothing but the Gospel. But there is a wide and well-defined sphere of what may without offence be termed negative religion. It is best described by its own self-chosen title of Protestantism. Without, of course, for one moment saying that its professors ignore or neglect what is positive in faith or morals, that which differentiates the one and the other is hostility to Rome and whatever is Roman in genius or tendency. It is quite consistent with fidelity to the Church of England to entertain each or any of these different theories—to hold, that is, that at the Reformation she elaborated for herself a system based upon or divergent from the old faith. The two elements are there, beyond a doubt; and it is no disrespect to the Established Church to confess her the result of a compromise;

but there are many of her most earnest members who will not allow this. On one side the line between Rome and England is only the shadowy one of the supremacy. In all other respects the systems are one and the same. On the other, "No peace with Rome" is the one badge of profession. Among endlessly varying details of faith and practice this, which I have ventured to call a negative characteristic, forms a common bond of union. I term the school that of Aggressive Protestantism, and I take the Rev. Robert Maguire, Vicar of Clerkenwell, as beyond a doubt the representative of this school. In point of actual divergence from Rome, it would, of course, be quite true to say that the Broad Churchman differed *toto cœlo*, but it is not on that difference he elects to take his stand. The Aggressive Protestant does, and it makes me feel very old indeed when I recollect how many years ago it was I heard Mr. Maguire, then Secretary of the North London Protestant Institute, preach a sermon in the parish church, Islington, on the Romish doctrine of Intention. I was then coquetting with the mild Puseyism of a quarter of a century since, and thought Mr. Maguire, if not an actual heretic, at least very unæsthetic and unappreciative. I gloried at that time in my title of Anglo-Catholic; but I still see him "in my mind's eye," surrounded by piles of folios, in the lofty three-decker of St. Mary's, Islington; and I recollect how very clinching his arguments were

against that little understood doctrine of Romanism. It is not many sermons a man can recall after twenty years; but I have a distinct recollection of that discourse, and on renewing my acquaintance with Mr. Maguire on a recent Wednesday evening I found him still dealing very hard blows indeed at the old enemy.

I selected a week-day instead of a Sunday for my visit to Clerkenwell, because I had seen announced in the *Times* the opening of a series of historical lectures on "The Martyrs and Reformers of the Church," to be followed by an examination and distribution of prizes awarded by the Protestant Educational Institute. Now, here was a certain opportunity for catching my Aggressive Protestant in full protest. Accordingly, being informed by the printed announcements that Clerkenwell Church was only four minutes from Farringdon Street Station, I availed myself once more of the Metropolitan Rail, which serves to link together the most opposite poles of religious thought, and soon found myself, only about half-an-hour too early, in the fine parish church by the Sessions House, where a cheery old verger was just lighting up. I invariably go thus early, to get the *genius loci* well into my constitution, and, if possible, to confab with the beadle or pew-openers if they happen to be, as at Clerkenwell, civil and communicative.

St. James's Church must be capable of accommo-

dating a very large congregation, with its double tier of galleries, which so gladden the eyes of an ultra-Protestant. Of course, it was not full on the occasion to which I refer. In fact, the galleries were not used, but the body of the church was well filled, the congregation consisting mainly, but by no means exclusively, of young men. Prizes ranging from 1*l*. to 10*l*. were offered for the competitors who should pass an examination to be held in April. So there was a novel element of studentship in the congregation which lent an additional interest to the gathering. Having "interviewed" Mr. Maguire in the vestry beforehand, I was installed in a vast official pew, sacred to the churchwardens and sidesmen, but occupied on this occasion by myself, a curate, and the vicar's wife, both of whom took voluminous notes.

The fine old chimes rang out for a quarter of an hour, and then Mr. Maguire entered and took his place at a lectern, which stood in front of one of the old-fashioned pulpits and reading-desks in the centre of the church at the east end. He was clad in surplice, Dublin M.A. hood, and bands, and commenced the brief initiatory service with a hymn from a small collection which was used at open-air services, and circulated in little sheets in the church. The congregation joined heartily, the curate mildly, as became a curate; but the vicar's wife, if she will pardon the personality, sang like a whole congregation rolled into one. There is nothing more charac-

teristic of the Evangelical school than this power of hymn-singing, often combined with a faculty of eloquent prayer, which is traceable throughout the lay community much in the same proportion as extempore preaching prevails among the clergy. I take this as an evident symptom of sincerity. They have their religion always ready to hand. We may not like the quality of the article; in fact, we may think it often savours too much of *one* Article—the 17th; but there it is, such as it is. In professions of other branches of the faith one too often finds the faculties of prayer and praise well-nigh paralysed.

To return to my narrative. After the hymn had been sung the Apostles' Creed was recited; several collects were read, including those for St. John Baptist's, St. Peter's, St. Mark's, and All Saints' Day; the General Thanksgiving was taken full-voiced by the congregation—as it surely ought to be—in conjunction with the Minister; the Apostolic Benediction was given, a second hymn sung, and the brief service, appropriate for its character as well as its brevity, was over. After a voluntary, the lecture began, Mr. Maguire having previously arrayed himself in his academic gown, and delivering his discourse in a slow and quasi-professorial style, so as to allow of notes being taken by his student-congregation. The first lecture was purely introductory to the course, and was to the following effect. It is, of course, necessary largely to condense, as the discourse

was very long. It was always practical, often eloquent, and if it erred at all it was only in the way of prolixity.

God, said the lecturer, has ever sought the service of true men. All loyal service is the service of the heart, and God is satisfied with nothing short of this. And although all hearts are known to Him, yet, for many reasons, God will have men's hearts and affections proved. (1) For His own sake, that His work should be honoured in the testimony; (2) for the individual's sake, that "the trial of faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, may be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ;" and (3) for His Church's sake, that, by the "cloud of witnesses," each may be encouraged to run with patience. Thus, amidst the illustrations of faith, in the Church's history, there are none more interesting, more bracing, or more pertinent than those recounted in Heb. xi., and since continued in the lives and deaths of "martyrs" in the Church of Christ.

The English word "martyr," he said, is purely a Greek word (*μάρτυρ*), signifying a "witness." The Latin word is *testis*, from whence our word Protestant, a *witness for*, or in behalf of, Truth. The word "martyr" did not originally mean one who had witnessed unto death. It is used in its ordinary sense (a *witness*) in the following passages:—Matt. xviii. 16; Acts i. 8; vii. 58; Heb. xii. 1. Yet, even in the

Holy Scriptures, it came ere long to be used in its more limited sense, but then always with some intensifying expression, indicating suffering and death—*e.g.*, Acts xxii. 20, “the *blood* of thy *martyr* Stephen;” Rev. ii. 13, “Antipas, my faithful *martyr*, slain among you;” Rev. xvii. 6, “the *blood* of the *martyrs* of Jesus.” In modern language the word has come to be applied to that class of witnesses only who suffered unto death. These were called “martyrs;” short of death, they were called “confessors.”

Martyrdom is a voluntary death for a cause—dying for testimony; not as culprits and felons, who would escape if they could, and elude the sentence of their punishments. The men of whom we speak in these lectures, suffered willingly, joyfully, and “counted it all joy” when they fell into these fiery trials. When John Frith was told he might escape if he liked, and his gaolers were disposed to leave him and give him a chance, he said, “If you go away, you will find Frith at your heels.” Rogers was offered pardon at the last, and under the most tempting circumstances—in the presence of his wife and ten children—and he declined to accept deliverance, so that Fuller, the witty historian, says of him—“Rogers had eleven good reasons to favour himself—namely, a wife and ten children!” If ever a cause was honoured in its adherents, it was the Reformation. Science and Philosophy afford no

such testimonies; it is only religion that has the witness of blood; and for this motive—"Having respect unto the recompense of the reward."

The deaths of martyrs were not expiatory, but only exemplary; not for atonement, but for witness and example. There is every possible difference between the two, and it is important to bear this in mind, lest we confound things that differ. It is in this wise; there are some who would discredit and depreciate the atoning death of Christ, by urging that it was a distinguished martyrdom. But it is not so: Christ was not merely a martyr; an infinitely higher value attaches to *His* death—He died not merely to attest a doctrine, but to *atone for sin*. Jesus was a sin-offering; and hence the distinction between a martyrdom for testimony and a sacrifice for atonement. The death of Christ was utterly unlike a martyr's death. *He* died in agony, with strong crying and tears; praying that his "cup" might pass from him; *He* sought deliverance from the bitter end, and cried out against his pains; not so the Martyrs—*they* endured all gladly, smiled at approaching death, embraced the pyre and clasped the faggots, welcomed their awful death, and rallied each other in the flames. With Jesus it was not so; witness the "seven cries from the cross." What was like to that in the martyr scenes? In agonizing pain he died; and above all, that cry that martyrs never uttered—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken

me?" The martyrs never felt themselves forsaken. God was never so near to them as at the burning stake. And why was all this? Because in Christ God found sin that day; and wherever God finds sin, "He *must* visit it." He found it that day in His own sinless Son, who "was made sin for us;" and He smote him—"The chastisement of our peace was upon him." His was a vicarious offering—"The just for the unjust." Christ Jesus bore our sins, the sins of the whole world; but martyrs bore only their own cross, in their testimony for which they died. "Divine justice was satisfied" in the death of Christ, while human malice triumphed in the death of martyrs.

The history of the martyrs, he continued, begins early—"from the blood of righteous Abel." Some of the earliest impulses of the Christian faith were from the same cause. The child Jesus Himself emerged, as from a sea of blood, in the martyrdom of the holy innocents—Herod's first-fruits, the first droppings of the storm. John the Baptist was imprisoned and beheaded for his bold testimony. Stephen's death was for witness; and its immediate effect was to strike deeper the fibres of the Church, and to scatter the seed as it ripened, to reproduce itself in other fields. Thus, even then it was true that "the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church." Nearly all the apostles testified by their

death to the truths they preached, and thus has it been from time to time ever since.

And for what cause, he asked, was persecution then? and from whence did it proceed? The religion of Christ was to pervade the world, and, to this end, it must antagonize every false system. Therefore, it provoked opposition from the first. It brought "not peace, but a sword." Christianity was a new revelation, setting up new interests, new duties, new responsibilities. With a determined future, as living leaven it was to work till the whole was leavened; and it gave early signs of its living power. It was sent forth to convert the world, to pronounce all existing religions worthless or effete, to cast down imaginations, to abolish idols, and to establish a spiritual religion. The effect on such heathen religions was great and vital. This overturning of long-cherished institutions and beliefs would be sure to be unwelcome, and to be opposed with might and main. Against two opposing forces Christianity had to contend—against the Jew, with all his legal and national prejudice of religion and of blood; against the Gentile, with all his numberless superstitions, backed up by the power of imperial Rome. Christianity, as it was then preached in all the fervour of its first love, would admit no compromise. Dagon must fall and Christ be exalted; Aaron's rod must blossom though all other rods be

barren and bare; the image that fell down from Jupiter must be shown to be but the work of the craftsman.

Accordingly Rome, the chief seat of government, became the chief place of persecution. Cæsar was the scourge of the Church of God. All hatred and malice and disaffection to the cause of Christ culminated there. The Coliseum bears its terrible testimony to the sufferings of Christians. Every cause, every reason, every pretext, was laid hold of to quicken or renew the persecutions. If a plague fell upon the city, if defeat discomfited the Roman legions in the battle-field, if the Tiber was swollen a foot or two by sudden rains, "Bring out the Christians to the lions!" was the order of the day. Our great martyrologist, Foxe, reviews that period at some length. It forms the suitable beginning to his great and world-famed book, which is, for the evenings of this course, to supply us with most of our studies and reflections.

Biographical notes of Foxe were added, and mention made of the sanction accorded by Convocation to his "Book of Martyrs"—a copy of which was ordered to be placed in every church and in every episcopal residence in England. "And why," it was asked, "should we not enforce this order on both Bishops and Clergy in these days?"

Altogether, my previous good opinion of Mr. Maguire, as a controversial preacher or lecturer,

was more than revived by this introduction. Broad Churchman as I may be called, un-Protestant as I am bound to be, still a little tilt with the dogmatists is wonderfully attractive and invigorating sometimes, and there was a real old Roundhead smack about this lecture; so much so, that I was even induced to attend a discourse on a second evening, when fate led me to penetrate the unattractive regions of Bagnigge Wells in the midst of an awful fog. All was bright at St. James's. The congregation was still large, though, for evident reasons, not quite of such proportions as on the previous occasion. In the first place, Clerkenwell is not quite the place one would select for a walk during a fog; and then, again, it is in the nature of things that enthusiasm should subside. The Protestant young men, however, were note-taking with unabated energy, and Mr. Maguire had now got well into his subject. Having given a clear *résumé* of the Three Centuries of Persecution, he proceeded to show how, after Christianity became the established faith of the Empire, "the sword only changed hands; from Cæsar it passed to the Pontiff, and the suicidal policy was adopted of Christian hands shedding Christian blood." Contemporaneously came a declension from the faith of the Gospel which had been kept pure under the stress of persecution. The Church grew luxurious under patronage. It is true of communities as of

individuals ; the bitter tonic of persecution is preferable to the luscious draughts of prosperity.

Then he proceeded to show how—having sheathed the sword of controversy—the Church entered into a series of compromises with the heathen world. Then, as now, the Church was perverted. The salt began to lose its savour. It followed thus in the wake of the Church of Israel, and the defection was twofold. There was a declension both in the way of faith and doctrine, but, greater even than this, in the way of outward worship. This tendency towards external objective adoration was an ever-present temptation. Human nature always gravitates, he said, towards sensuous worship, and against this both the Old and New Testament are equally strong. From the worship of external objects, the Church passed to the demi-god system of Lords many and Gods many. Image-worship, the worship of relics and of the dead, were among its earliest symptoms. But with the first dawn of error came the first protest ; came the re-affirmation of the old faith. Hereupon followed a spirited and minutely detailed account of the controversy between Vigilantius and Jerome, both of whom, the lecturer said, were head and shoulders above their fellows ; one in defending the old faith, the other the new state of things. The discipline of celibacy followed ; tapers began to be burnt in broad daylight ; shrines were venerated, and monastic institutions organized.

There was a strong undergrowth of error; but the Cottian Alps became filled with the seeds of Vigilantius, and are bearing fruit to the present day.

Such are only shreds and patches of a series of lectures which can scarcely with greater fairness be taken as samples of the whole, than the brick which, in the old joke-book, the man carried about as a specimen of a house he wanted to sell, could be regarded as a fair sample of the edifice.

Surely, whatever we may think of the principles being advocated, this is the fair and manly way of standing up for them. There is another man, at quite the opposite pole of religious thought, of whom I have spoken laughingly, but whom I honour for his pluck in defending by the historical method what I, of course, believe to be an untenable position. I mean Father Ignatius. Mr. Maguire would have us all good, hard-headed Protestants like himself. Mr. Lyne thinks we ought to affiliate the Benedictine system on Anglicanism. Can anything be more delightfully evidential as to the comprehensiveness of our Establishment than the fact that both these gentlemen hold Anglican orders, and have officiated in the metropolis beneath the very nose of the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Canterbury contemporaneously? That is not to our actual purpose, though the fact of such variety alone makes possible our present series of papers. What one rather wishes to urge is the perfect legi-

timacy of this aggressive Christianity in a Church system where private judgment is an ingredient. As Broad Churchmen, of course we don't "aggress" anybody; but if I should ever want to "aggress" any one courteously but completely, I would attend any number of Protestant lectures at St. James's, Clerkenwell, and strive that a double portion of Mr. Maguire's spirit might rest upon me.

It would not be giving a fair summary of Mr. Maguire's different modes of influence did one omit to mention that he is a poet as well as a Protestant controversialist. To an outsider there does not seem much in common between poetry and aggressive Christianity. "No Popery" seems antagonistic to Parnassus. Two gaily-bound little volumes—published (need it be said?) by Messrs. Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday—attest the fertility of Mr. Maguire's muse; and the fact that an edition of a thousand of each was exhausted beforehand by subscription among his congregation shows that he does not pipe in vain or "waste his sweetness on the desert air." "*Lyra Evangelica*" consists mainly of poems on Scriptural subjects, one series being "Footsteps of Jesus," another "The Parables of our Lord." The other volume is of a mixed character, and is entitled "Sighs and Songs of Earth." No room can be found for a review in these pages. Let it suffice to have enrolled—Maguire among the poets!

DEAN STANLEY AT WESTMINSTER
ABBEY.

It has been too much the fashion to suppose that, while sects have each one their own particular feature of interest and shade of colour, the Church of England is simply colourless and uninteresting: just as Mr. Lowe, in accounting for the want of coherence in the Liberal party, laid it down that Conservatism was stagnation; and there was, he said, only one way of standing still, while there were infinitely varying methods of "moving on." Unless I greatly mistake, however, we shall find, within the comprehensive walls of "the Church of England as by law established," quite as much complexity, quite as delicate *nuances* as in any, or amongst all, religious bodies. In fact, an objection from the other side tells us that the complications are too many, and the differences of parties too internecine, for us to predicate unity of their aggregation; and when we speak of the Church of England, facetious outsiders derisively ask "*which* Church of England?" An honest and appreciative examination of these different shades of faith and practice may possibly have the effect of assuring us that they are

no more than might be expected as evidences of vitality; that they are, in fact, only analogous to Mr. Lowe's different methods of "moving on;" and that we may still, notwithstanding, fearlessly and unhesitatingly pronounce the accustomed words of our grand old symbol—"I believe in one Catholic and Apostolic Church."

If any one were inclined to question the characteristic of the Church of England as a living power in society, he could scarcely do better than pay a visit to St. Paul's or Westminster Abbey, whether at an ordinary service or when some great preacher—such as Canon Liddon in the one case, or Dean Stanley in the other—is to preach. In the vast throngs which then crowd the aisles he would see, in the form of an object-lesson, as it were, the best argument in favour of the Church of England in general, and the cathedral system in particular. It is a stock objection of outsiders that the Church is only "respectable," and the attendance of worshippers mostly perfunctory. Better give back the cathedrals to the Catholics—meaning the *Roman* Catholics—say they; you don't know what to do with them. They want them for their big processions, such as they had down at St. Edmund's College, Ware, the other day, when the Archbishop of Westminster opened the "Fourth Provincial Synod of Westminster." Let such detractors absent themselves one single Sunday from the special attractions

of Mr. Spurgeon's tabernacle, or their own particular conventicle, whatever it may be, and fairly appraise the congregations that gather in those two great *foci* of metropolitan devotion, the Abbey and St. Paul's. They will see that the Church is not dead, or even sleeping. Dormant it may have been. I can remember when a service at either of these places was a soporiferous thing enough; when the lay vicars lolled about in the most undevotional way, the choristers openly played their "little games" during service, and the clergy—softly be it spoken—did not set them a particularly good example of reverence in the House of God. I myself recollect sitting close to the singing-men one day, and distinctly hearing the alto sing to the tenor, instead of the verse in the psalm, the words, "A——, I've got a fine Cheshire cheese at home. Come with me after service and taste it." But all this is changed, thanks to such men as Dean Stanley, Canon Gregory, &c. Not only are the services at our metropolitan cathedral and abbey perfect as specimens of musical art, but as examples of reverent and devout worship; and, what is more to the purpose, they are thoroughly appreciated as such by vast masses of worshippers, drawn from "all sorts and conditions of men." Never, perhaps, was the true ideal of Catholic worship more thoroughly realized, for the poor man and the peer sit side by side; the fine lady with her jewels, and the poor seamstress in her scanty Sunday

best, are equally well cared for by the courteous attendants.

Finding that Dean Stanley was to preach on the Sunday after the Bishop of Winchester's funeral, I went betimes to the abbey, knowing by experience the crowds that were accustomed to gather on such occasions, but I really was not prepared for the scene that awaited me. The cold grey stone of the magnificent Gothic arches contrasted gratefully with the glare of the July sun outside, which stole in, subdued and softened, through the deep colours of the "storied windows." A solemn funeral-march marked the entrance of the clergy and choir, and the whole service was of a chastened character, the plaintive *De Profundis* forming one of the psalms of the day. The anthem was the appropriate one of Handel, "When the ear heard him, then it blessed him," &c.

After the third Collect, Dean Stanley ascended the pulpit, and read in his sonorous voice from MS. a long sermon, mainly on the subject of Bishop Wilberforce's death, though glancing incidentally also at that of Lord Westbury. The Dean took as his text the 27th verse, 1st chap. 2 Samuel, "How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!" After alluding to the circumstances under which this lamentation over Saul and Jonathan was uttered by the Psalmist, he remarked that it was a dirge which had become the model of all like lamentations. Its strains had been wedded to the immortal music of

the Dead March of *Saul*, which since the days of Handel had always been associated with the departure of illustrious Englishmen; and the words of the text were inscribed in Latin over the door of the chapel which contained the ashes of the Spanish Cid —“*Quomodo ceciderunt fortes!*” It was the expression of true patriotic instinct which binds a nation together, and calls each one of us to feel pride in the gifts and graces of those of our most famous countrymen with whom we had the least connexion, and with whom perhaps we might have been in perpetual conflict. It described also, in language as true as pathetic, the shock with which we received the tidings of the tragical close of any brilliant or eventful life. It was a song that sanctioned and sanctified the irrepressible instinct of the human heart, which at such a solemn moment refused to speak of the dead anything but that which was good. Of the great lawyer who has gone from us, said the preacher, this is not the occasion to say more than a very few words. To those who feel the majesty of human law, to those who know the divinity of that justice which guards alike the humble wants of the poor and needy and him that hath no helper, and also the eager struggles of the soul after spiritual truth and freedom, it can never be a matter of indifference when the Most High sends to this earth or takes away from it one of those keen intellects which burst through the entanglements of prejudice and

the mists of passion in common life, and by whom crooked ways are made straight, and the false is shrivelled up and passes away like a scroll of parchment when it is rolled together. But of the great Churchman whom the nation deplores it is impossible not to speak more at length within these walls, in the presence of those to whom his face, his voice, his every look and tone, were so familiar as almost to form a part of our existence. Over this abbey he presided for a short time in the early days of his famous career. Many a time and oft within these walls his eloquence has touched the hearts of thousands. Beneath the floor of this church lie the remains of his yet more illustrious father, in a grave which, but for overruling family affection, would have contained his own at this moment. In the awful suddenness of his departure there is something, even without going beyond the event itself, that cannot but strike the most careless. The stroke of death, which came in the very midst of life, has, as by a lightning flash, transfigured with a preternatural vividness the whole course and character of the departed. The wide-sweeping cataract of ubiquitous vitality has been checked midway in its headlong course. That figure which stood confronting us at the end of almost every avenue and prospect of public and social life has disappeared from our gaze. Those bright and keen weapons of war, which made his

opponents feel that in him they had found a "foe-man worthy of their steel"—

"*Experto credite, quantus*

In clypeum assurgat, quo turbine torqueat hastam,"

have crumbled into dust. The spirit of boundless energy has passed from the very height and fulness of earthly existence into the unseen spiritual world ; has passed, if I may so apply the sacred words as they were applied in the last week by one who was all but a witness of the fatal catastrophe—has passed away in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, as at the last trump. On the personal graces and accomplishments of the departed it is not for a comparative stranger to dwell, nor to intermingle with the grief which wrings the heart of many a mourning friend at this moment over a loss which, to them, is beyond repair. Of his opinions it will be useless on this occasion to say a single word ; of the complex result of that marvellous mixture, as of many men's personalities in one ; of the various aspects thus presented to those who viewed his course most nearly ; of its ultimate effects on the spiritual development of the English Church—history must judge at leisure. We are not here to-day to criticise, but to learn. We are here not to condemn or be condemned, but to be instructed, to be touched, to be elevated to those spheres where no jarring thoughts will intrude, and where, speaking as in the palace of truth, we could

speaking only of the incontestable and the indestructible. What was there, then, in his career as a Churchman which has an enduring value beyond all questions of opinion or party, and beyond all analysis of motives? There was, first, deep planted in him a sense of the grandeur of the profession of an English clergyman. This was quite irrespective of any views which he might have held for or against the sacerdotal or sacramental virtue of the clerical order. It was something far deeper, wider, higher. It was the consciousness that the English Church and the ministry of the English Church were institutions reaching far down into the vitals of our constitution and our welfare, embracing all the elements of our domestic, political, and social life. To this consciousness, no doubt, his own extraordinary geniality and versatility gave wings and feet and hands; but, from whatever cause, it enabled him to combine, as in one focus, all the characteristics and capacities with which God had so richly endowed him. It enabled him to regard the ecclesiastical office, not as do many gifted men of our day, with contempt or indifference, but with pride and affection. He represented, as in a visible shape, the conspicuous, many-sided character of the English Church, and which every national Church ought to seek for itself. When we admire this in him, we claim it as the heritage of the Church itself. When we recall the innumerable points at which he touched the circle of intellectual

and social interests, we see as in a figure the richness and variety of the gifts which the English Church must absorb if it would hope to maintain its influence. We see in the general admiration bestowed on this aspect of his course the pledge and assertion that, for all such gifts, for all such manifestations of eloquence, grace, and knowledge, the great ecclesiastical order ought to find a place if it is to hold its own among the ruling powers that guide mankind. The world in our day is sometimes tempted to regard the clerical profession as too narrow and too insignificant to be worthy of national concern or world-wide interest. The Church of our day has been sometimes tempted to regard the mighty gifts of genius, prudence, common sense, patriotism, and wide knowledge as too secular to be worthy of a spiritual man or a spiritual order. Such was not the view either on the one side or the other by which alone the admiration of a course like that which has now been closed can in any degree be justified or explained. If the Church of England is to be a civilized Church, and not a barbarian sect ; if it is to be ruled by a reasonable religion and not by a false superstition—then, and then only, it can draw wisdom and strength from such ecclesiastics as him whom all parties now unite in deploring. Further, this hold on the vast outer world and on the general policy of the Church was in him united with an undeviating and punctual fulfilment of all

those laborious duties which his Episcopal functions imposed upon him ; rather, I would say, which his own magnificent conception of what the Episcopal office should be, created for him. Keen as was his perception, insatiable as was his enjoyment of the intellectual and social pleasures which were open to him in an unusual degree, partly through his great historic position, but yet more through his own unbounded receptivity, and his own inexhaustible endowments ; yet in spite of those distractions, and notwithstanding those temptations, he devoted himself to the tedious details of administration, lent himself to the incessant calls on his time, patience, and judgment, ever increasing in proportion to the growth of his fame and usefulness, as though he had no other occupation or concern. Indefatigable, with the indefatigability which has sometimes been called the sure sign of genius ; filled with that strong sense of public obligation which belongs to every genuine Englishman ; transformed, shall we not venture to say, with something of that loftier spiritual inspiration which to him was almost a birthright, and which blended itself inextricably with the lights and shades of his manifold character, he employed his singular gifts and penetrating influence in the service of the humblest of his curates and the homeliest of the parishes under his charge, as unsparingly, as cheerfully, as effectively, as on behalf of the highest in the land. When he turned his face towards his

diocese, then, in the language of the ordination service, he "drew all his studies that way." Perhaps it was that the office of an English Bishop grew, as it were, under his hand almost into a new institution. His example became, perforce, contagious. No Bishop, no clergyman, we might almost say no layman, within his reach, could stand still without feeling the touch, the stimulus, the magic atmosphere of an activity which could neither rest itself, nor, as has been well said, suffer those around him to rest. No doubt, in this respect, he was but one instrument among many in the work of reanimating a slumbering Church. He inherited the forces of that religious movement, which, beginning with Wesley in the last century, was continued, in all the simplicity of Christian zeal, in his father's home at Clapham. In that fresh re-invigoration of the Episcopal office other prelates now gone to their reward had preceded him in the conscientious and laborious discharge of hitherto unpractised duties. Others, still living, have followed him with an energy no less vigilant and even more self-denying. But it was reserved for his splendid gifts to crown this course with a halo of its own which once kindled can never be extinguished. This is a part of his example which, alike from its homeliness and its brilliancy, all of us, however remote from ecclesiastical affairs, however differing, whether from his means or his ends, can appreciate and admire. It derives also an additional solemnity from

the reflection that he laboured thus incessantly, with a constant and an increasing forethought of the sudden end which at last came in so unlooked-for a form. "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day. The night cometh, when no man can work." And night has come upon him as on the sun in the tropics. There was no twilight ; no preparation. It may come to each of us in like manner : may it find us, as it found him, working and watching. His life was a glorification of industrious work ; his death was the seal set upon it.

Of the details of that work there is one point upon which I may be allowed to dwell for a moment ; because it is drawn from our own experience in this place, and because it applies with special force to one particular portion of my hearers. It is the custom of this abbey, in consequence of the peculiar independence of its ecclesiastical position, that when a confirmation is held for the Westminster scholars, the dean selects some bishop, formerly connected with Westminster, to administer the sacred rite. It has been my lot for nine successive years, with one exception, to request on these occasions the aid of the departed Bishop, both because he once ruled as chief officer over this body, and also because of the singular and surpassing grace with which he discharged this particular function. The confirmation office, as thus administered amongst us, was gradually moulded through his influence, and it was in order to conse-

crate the effect of his presence in those who came to be confirmed, and to bring them more directly within the thrilling tones of that sweet silvery voice, sinking on those occasions into a familiar conversation or solemn whisper, that the service was transferred from its ordinary place in the choir to the chapel of King Henry VII. And there year by year the successive generations of Westminster scholars heard the words of fatherly counsel from those marvellous lips, which never spoke with more gracious simplicity and unaffected pathos than in those addresses. The slightest hint conveyed to him a moment before would be caught up and transformed into some striking figure or precept that could never be forgotten. The advice, the warnings, the consolations, though always on the same subject, were always varied, always fresh as from the "womb of the morning." You, my young hearers, who three weeks ago knelt in that chapel to receive his benediction, will remember in future years that you heard on that now memorable occasion the parting admonitions of one of England's most famous prelates. May you reflect even now, in the days of your youth, that it was the inspiring sight of your young faces, the peculiar interest awakened in him by the trials, the influence, the tenderness, the innocence of boys at school, that were the means of drawing forth from that most eloquent son of a most eloquent father words and arguments more persuasive, more affecting, and therefore more truly

eloquent, than any that were ever heard from his mouth either by the lesser or the greater congregation. Upon you he poured forth all that was in him of his nobler and finer nature. Be it yours to bear it away as his latest legacy from this glorious abbey, which he so dearly loved, and which delights to rank his name among the most brilliant of those who have presided over its destinies. And now, in concluding, amidst the uncertainty and insecurity of all judgment formed under the shock of such a catastrophe, one thing is absolutely certain: the shock has left a blank, and has opened a void which cannot but be felt in a greater or less degree through the coming fortunes of the whole of English Christendom. In the public meeting, in the religious assembly, in the social gathering, one face will be looked for that now will be seen no more; one voice that charmed all hearers is for ever silent; and not only so, but an existence is extinguished which was the chief stimulating or retarding force of almost every movement of ecclesiastical policy. New necessities, new duties, new opportunities for good crowd into the vacant space; and of the weapons by which the war or the peace of the Church has been maintained for the last thirty years, not a few, whether spear or sword, or bow, are buried with him in his grave. It was said by one who loved him dearly and knew him well when he left his first episcopate—"The romance of the diocese is gone!" The same in a large and more

varied sense may be said now that he has left us altogether. The romance, the conflict, the dramatic interest, the multifarious excitement, the trumpet's silver call, the phosphoric, electric atmosphere, the iron sharpening iron, the magic of dissolving views—all these are gone: we have turned over a fresh leaf in the history of the English Church. It is for those who remain to weigh well what are the characters which should be written on its future pages. We have been warned in various tones that such as he was is not likely again to paint or adorn the tale of our eventful annals. It may well be so; for such a rare and at the same time such an intricate combination of qualities comes once in the age of a nation, and comes not again. "The mighty are fallen, and the weapons of war are perished," and no art or effort can recall or reconstruct them. But the materials out of which these weapons were forged, and the stage on which the heroes of the world and of the Church have acted, still continue, and will continue as long as goodness is to be promoted, as long as freedom is to be secured, as long as truth is to be vindicated, as long as selfishness, indolence, and falsehood have to be combated on the face of this distracted earth. In the weariness of life's struggles we are sometimes tempted to think, Blessed, thrice happy, are they that have fallen in the fulness of years and of honours, that have gone beyond the reach of misconstruction, of failure, of temptation.

Blessed, thrice blessed, to have passed at one bound from the midst of toilsome labours, arduous duties, and eager aspirations, into the presence of Him who knows whereof we are made, and in whose light we shall see light. Yet for those who are left behind in the dull wear and tear of those earthly scenes, there is a call that reverberates from the grave. True, there is not, nor will there be for many a year to come, one of like gifts with him who has now been removed, as neither was there for many a long year before. The race he ran is not yet over. England and the English Church have still a course before them, larger, wider, than any individual career. We know well that there have been in other times and countries revivals of religious life, not for good, but evil, or at least for very mixed and partial good ; zeal without knowledge, life without light, faith without charity ; revivals not of living and eternal truths, but of ancient errors and dead superstitions. Let it be our aim and prayer that our departed brother shall not have laboured in vain in his efforts to reanimate this Church of England. Let our tribute to him be in the years that are coming that there shall be imparted to the future movements of the English Church an upward spirit that shall ever more and more direct our wandering efforts rightly, which shall lead us even through the valley of the shadow of death to the green pastures and beside the waters of comfort. Let us remember that the

true and only purpose of every religious institution, and of every religious revival, is to make earth like heaven, and man like Jesus Christ. Let us remember that the glory of the clergy is not to set themselves apart as a separate caste, but to make themselves one with their fellow-countrymen and fellow-Christians. Let us remember that the chiefest and noblest weapons of war with which error can be subdued are those which are forged, heated, and burnished in the furnace of unflinching inquiry, of absolute love of truth, of unshrinking and unswerving sincerity, wielded with discriminating forbearance, strict impartiality, and boundless charity. Let us not seek to exterminate differences, for differences are the essence and fruits of life, but to prevent differences from becoming divisions. Let us be sure that in every effort to enlarge our borders, to open our gates, to retain whatever there is of true and holy among ourselves, and to welcome whatever there is of true and holy among our estranged brethren, is the strength of a Church whose boast it is that it is the Church of England, the Church of the Reformation, the Church of Him who said, "When I am lifted up I will draw all men unto myself," and who also said, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

Many members of both Houses of Parliament were present at this service; and the Archbishop of Canterbury, not robed, but simply as a member of that

mighty congregation, occupied a stall next to the Dean. As we filed slowly out to the majestic strains of Handel's Dead March in *Saul*, the most unimpassioned must have felt his soul stirred within him, and may have learned to his profit the same lesson that was taught even more solemnly still by that open grave in the quiet Sussex churchyard, that there is more of real pathos in the simple ritual of the Church of England, properly carried out, than in all the meretricious adjuncts of the costliest spectacle ever presided over by a master of the ceremonies.

CANON LIDDON AT ST. PAUL'S.

IF one of our ancestors were suddenly to start into re-animation, he might, on certain Sundays in the year, fancy that the old glories of Paul's Cross had continued undimmed to the present day. He might even deem those ancient splendours enhanced as he saw the Metropolitan District Railway disgorge its laden trains at Blackfriars to hear Canon Liddon preach ; for it is of his period of residence at St. Paul's we speak. This preacher gained what is for most of us an unenviable notoriety by delivering sermons of an hour and a quarter in length ; but the strangest phenomenon of all was that he got people to listen to him—got vast congregations to sit at St. James's, Piccadilly, and actually wish there was more coming, instead of hailing the ascription as a relief. I saw Canon Liddon advertised to preach under the dome at St. Paul's one Sunday—no smaller area is capable of accommodating his congregation—and determined I would take him as my representative man of the day. In a general way there can scarcely be imagined a greater contrast than Fleet Street on a Sunday and Fleet Street on a week-day. For six days the tide of life goes ebbing and flowing

without pause, but Sunday is generally dead calm. The very press-men do not make their appearance until people are well in church at their morning or evening devotions. Then, in the former case, the luxurious leader-writers, in the latter the night-working owls of sub-editors, surge up to the surface. But for these, Sunday would be a breathless calm in Blackfriars; but Canon Liddon makes a very palpable ripple on the surface when he is the afternoon preacher at Paul's Cross.

Studiously avoiding to use my privileges, either as a journalist or a clergyman, by pushing to the front seats, I determined I would go in with the crowd to St. Paul's that Sunday afternoon, and see whether I could analyse its component parts, and in any way test the effect of the Canon's sermon on them. Sitting beneath the shade of Samuel Johnson's monument, I saw gathered before me one of those vast seas of human beings which it is so exceptional for a preacher to get together without meretricious aid of some kind. There were large numbers of ladies, old, young, and more middle-aged, of course; but the female element was far from being so largely in the ascendant as we often see it in congregations. There were young men—from shopmen and City clerks to West-end "blood"—and greyheaded men of all ages and classes. Clergymen abounded, coming in—many of them late, like myself, and evidently hurrying thither after a long morning service—to take a lesson

in pulpit oratory, or simply to enjoy the unaccustomed luxury of being preached to. Inflexible spinsters tried to occupy two or three chairs each, and gave infinite trouble to the gigantic gentleman in spectacles acting as amateur *Suisse de cathédrale*, and his attendant vergers, who flitted about in gowns and silver maces, and did their best politely to pack that huge gathering.

The Psalms, I regret to say, were being sung as I entered ; but it was "duty," and not inclination, that had broken in upon my habitual and inherent punctuality. Very sweetly did the cadences come from the large surpliced choir, and seem to roll from side to side of the peopled nave as the congregation took up their verses antiphonally. Then a venerable gentleman, with long white beard, read the lessons from a lofty eagle in the centre of the space under the dome. I had thought it would be impossible for him to make himself audible, but he did so with apparent ease by pitching his voice in a high key—in fact, almost monotoning the words of Holy Scripture. There was great reverberation, but I should think every one heard. The anthem was the exquisite one from Elijah, "If with all your hearts you truly seek Him, ye shall ever surely find Him;" and as I listened, spell-bound, to the touching solo, or the soft and chastened chorus with which it was supplemented, I could not but think of the dead master-musician who had been moved to tears there where I

was sitting, when he heard the little charity children sing their simple melodies at their annual gathering, reminding one of Keble's beautiful lines :—

“ Childlike though the voices be,
And untunable the parts,
Thou wilt own the minstrelsy,
If it flow from childlike hearts.”

I can remember the time when a service at St. Paul's was a very dreary, and, withal, a somewhat slovenly performance; but some good genius has waved his wand over the arrangements, and simply but effectually changed all that. The sermon was preached, not after the third Collect, as is customary in many cathedrals, but in the more usual place, at the conclusion of evening prayers. The pulpit is at the south-eastern portion of the vast circumference, and is surmounted by a huge but somewhat tawdry-looking sounding-board, supported from on high by a chain so slender as to give it the appearance of being likely to fall and crush any incautious preacher who should give way to extra enthusiasm in his discourse. There was no hymn or pause of any kind between the prayers and sermon; which was unfortunate, not only because an opportunity was lost of utilizing that splendid choir, but also because it obliged the preacher to leave his stall and mount the pulpit while the prayer of St. Chrysostom was being read; but we scarcely noticed the incongruity. We had emphatically come to “hear” Canon Liddon, as

the Clapham people speak of going to church, and our Chrysostom was now in his pulpit. His sharp-cut, shaven, and monastic-looking face peered out wistfully over the great assembly; and in a voice slightly forced, but quite audible, and with the unmistakable accent of a quondam academic "don," he gave out as his text the two opening verses of the Parable of the Unjust Steward—the Epistle for the day:—"There was a certain rich man which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, 'How is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.'"

First of all, the preacher noticed how this parable, like that of the Unjust Judge, was probably taken from some event in the current history of Palestine, and how vivid and effective such a circumstance would make the teaching if the hearers were well acquainted with the details. He then passed rapidly in review the familiar points of the story as one of "clever rascality," and showed how our Lord only reported, without endorsing, the commendation of the landlord. Probably the steward had a legal, though not a moral, right thus to tamper with his master's rental; but the approval of the master constituted what we might reverently describe as the *surprise* of the parable. We should expect the master to be angry, and so, no doubt, he would have

been had he been an English landlord ; but the course he took was just what we should expect to find taken in the East now. The Oriental mind is struck, not by right or wrong, but by audacity and success ; by a triumph of force or cunning. If not absolutely ruined by it, he would, as an Eastern, admire this stroke of clever rascality ; and this touch had much to do in making critics believe the story a real one.

The point enforced by this commendation was the necessity of prudence in matters that touched the soul. We must practically recognise two obvious truths. I. Every human being is simply a trustee. From the Queen down to the poorest person this is true ; there is no such thing as human ownership. This seemed, Canon Liddon said, a mere truism ; but all our gifts were either inherited or earned ; and in the first instance we did not give the energy of acquisition to those who bequeathed them to us, or in the second we did not give ourselves the strong arm or active brain by which we had earned them. Life itself was a gift. We were still only stewards. How little we made of this truth ! We spoke as if God was bound first to make us, and then to give us what we had ; as if we had substantive claims on God. Or else we complain that God had not done more for us, having done so much. The fundamental idea in our minds was, that as a matter of bare justice no one had claims on us. We transferred to

our relations with God the privileges given us by human law. If we spoke out, we should say that, as God had rights in heaven, so had we rights on earth. There were some cases—as, for instance, that of landed property—where men did recognise the fact of responsibility. It is not a mere possession of the owner, to do what he will. He holds it on trust for the poor, or for his country. His bit of land was naturally intended to support a certain population, and those rights were not set aside because that population were his tenants. If he cleared his land and sent the poor into some adjacent city, so as to lower his own rates, he would be condemned by the conscience of the country. This principle, like all truths, might be exaggerated and pushed to extremes ; but what was true of landed property in this country did apply in a certain degree to property of all kinds, “in the funds, in foreign funds—in nobody knew what funds.” We were still trustees. If we lost sight of this fact, we wasted goods which were not ours, but our Master’s. This waste was “one of the sad mysteries of God’s moral creation,” and it kept pace curiously with His bounty, as the activity of error seemed to keep pace with the spread of truth. The waste of property was most palpable when the young heir squandered it on the turf or at the gambling-table ; but property was often wasted in a less ostentatious way—as, for example, when a man spent all on himself, or hoarded his money as

though he were going to keep it for ever. The man who did not make a conscience of what he had by giving a tenth, or some fixed proportion, to God and his fellow-men, was wasting it, because he was treating it as his own, and not as what would have to be accounted for at Christ's throne ; and this fundamental error vitiated all his use of it. Then there was the waste of mental gifts ; for genius and talent were the same as money under this aspect. Having sharpened his wits by education, a man thought he might do as he liked with them, and wrote in "clever newspapers" or periodicals which sacrificed morality to sensation. Flashes of genius were thus wasted, because nothing was done for the glory of God or the progress of the human soul. Talent was given for one supreme end, and that end was God's glory.

There was the waste of influence, too : the power given to all of us of guiding others. It was wasted by indolence, timidity, or seeking popularity instead of truth. Fathers of families, heads of establishments, chief servants, teachers, clergymen, Bishops, and Archbishops—all these had a great account to give. All which they *might* do fell within the area of their responsibility.

Greater still was the waste of grace. It does not tell like property or ability ; and therefore, walking by sight and not by faith, as we did, we were apt to think less of it. But it was incomparably greater

than money or talent. It cost more, and could do more. It was earned by Christ's Blood. It touched not our material life, but our real selves; not this world, but the next. How piteous was the waste of opportunity in reference to prayer, instruction, the sacraments! Each opportunity was a property. Of such we were stewards; and what such stewardship involved we should only know hereafter.

Incidentally we might speak of the waste of health and time. Even sickness itself was sometimes an opportunity. "I would not for all the world," said a great sufferer who had led a careless life, "suffer one pang less than I have for the last five months." But health was God's best gift. Time was charged with irrevocable opportunities. Time, said a great Christian writer, should be made the most of every hour, as men sip a liqueur, drop by drop. No life could be wasted with impunity; for as waste proceeded on earth, it was being pleaded as an accusation before the Lord of Life in the courts of heaven.

II. A time would come, said the preacher, when an account would be demanded. It was not always the life that was taken. The literary man who had sacrificed truth to sensation might lose his sight. The waster of property found himself a pauper. The abuser of power saw that power collapse, and become a byword for moral impotence. Now and then there was a pause in the history of the world, as if for us to see the withdrawal of great endowments,

brought about by what was called the force of events. Five times in the present century had it thus been said to France, "Give an account of thy stewardship." So was it with Solomon in the lesson of the day. He was humbled, yet spared. It was a mercy when God thus withdrew His gifts, but left time for repentance. In view of this last account it might be better to end life at St. Helena than at the Tuileries.

But the call to account was not always merely one to retirement. Men were often summoned to appear before the throne. We had been solemnly reminded of late about these swift passages from bustling life to the stillness of the presence-chamber. We might be sitting in the last carriage of a train that got detached from the rest, nobody knew how. We might be cantering on our horse chatting to a friend, when, lo! a slip from the saddle, and in a moment all was over. The chasm that parted time from eternity was passed. He would not imply that sudden death was penal; it was often the act of a peculiarly tender love. All depended on whether those who were so summoned were living in thoughts of death or not. It was impossible not to think of that prelate who, one short month ago, had been administering one of our greatest dioceses; and it was a comfort to know that he lived habitually in the prospect of death. When a friend, some short time since, was speculating about a bishopric, he said,

"Probably I shall make the vacancy." Those who only knew him in public scarcely guessed how he carried this idea into all the departments of life. Yet so it was ; and now there rose around his grave "a chorus of encomium," affirming that he above all others had taught what the stewardship which was committed to an English Bishop might mean. While we were seeking how to perpetuate his memory, it was impossible not to ask where was that keen inquisitive mind *now*? It mattered little to him, said the eloquent preacher, with most solemn emphasis, what we should do, now that he had seen the everlasting realities ; now that he had passed the threshold of the world, and gazed, as a spirit might gaze, on the face of Christ. If he could speak, he would say, what his life and death said, "Be you who you may, you are stewards ; and the one thing is so to live that you may give account."

It had been said, he concluded, that public men were divisible into two classes : those who believed in the Day of Judgment, and those who did not. That meant that some had a sense of responsibility which others lacked ; and the observation was true of all of us. All had a stewardship. And with the majority of us all would soon be over. In thoughts of death, and of the account after death, we learnt healthy views of life and duty.

The sermon occupied something less than an hour in delivery, and at its conclusion the Canon gave out,

in simplest, homeliest fashion, the hymn, "When morning gilds the skies," which was sung by the choir in a way to make us regret that metrical hymns are not more usual in cathedrals.

As I passed out and saw the crowds filing from each separate door, I could not but recognise the fact that, with all our advance since the days of Paul's Cross, preaching might be still a great power amongst us, and the pulpit vie even with the press as an influential force on society.

AT THE GOLDEN LECTURE.

I SCARCELY know which is the more striking effect, that produced by the shining of a solitary light in the gloom of a Cathedral at night or by the silence of a church in the midst of the noise and din of a great city. I once entered the nave of an English Cathedral during a winter's evening, when the sexton was digging a grave by the light of a solitary candle, and actually saw him shovel out a skull of some ancient canon or other dignitary, just like the gravedigger in "Hamlet;" and I know not how it is, but when I attend a City church, as I did on the first Tuesday in Lent at St. Margaret's, Lothbury, I am conscious of a kindred sensation. There is a feeling of awe which it would be very difficult to analyse or explain. As I paced the busy thoroughfare of Moorgate Street from the Metropolitan Terminus to my destination, and by-and-by the bell of St. Margaret's clashed noisily out above the din of traffic, there seemed something incongruous in the combination of sounds. It was the same when I entered the building, and heard the roll of waggons and omnibuses, which even double windows were unable to exclude. The stillness and solitude within

seemed perfectly terrible in comparison with the noisy tide of life without. I had of course expected the silence, but I was not, I own, quite prepared for the solitude. I remembered what the Golden Lecture had been in the days of Henry Melvill, and how necessary it was to be in good time to get a seat. I recalled the unwonted spectacle of businessmen leaving the receipt of custom to listen to the eloquent, even if somewhat stilted and artificial, periods of the celebrated preacher. I thought the mantle had fallen on his successor, the Rev. Daniel Moore; and it was with some surprise that, after something like a rush from the station, and only arriving about a quarter to eleven, I found the church virtually empty. A dilapidated verger, in a dress coat worn with age, was walking pensively about, and seemed really quite glad to see me, put me in a centre seat, and supplied me at two several journeys with prayer-book and hymnal. He seemed not to be happy except when walking about, did that ancient verger, and only comparatively so even then. He looked as though he had something on his mind; perhaps it was the memory of olden times, when the Golden Lecture, the Laureateship of the pulpit, was more attractive than now. He left me to the contemplation of the sacred edifice, which, empty as it was, bore reference to better days, in the fact of numbers of now useless chairs being stacked on either side of the Communion Table,

above which were portraits of, I fancy, Moses and Aaron, in garments which resembled gowns with high stomachers. By the time the bell ceased, there were, I was amazed to find, only fifteen in the congregation. Three of those, including myself, were parsons, and one a maiden aunt of my own, who, I believe, feels bound in conscience to attend every Evangelical week-day sermon preached within an accessible radius of London. Most of the fifteen were grey-headed, and some dilapidated, like the verger. All were evidently Conservative and Evangelical to the very marrow.

At eleven o'clock a procession of two emerged from the vestry. One was a bearded gentleman, arrayed in surplice only, which he seemed to have put on in a hurry, forgetting his hood and stole. The other was the Reverend Daniel Moore, in a M.A. gown, brown with age as the verger's coat itself. The surpliced gentleman mounted the second story of a portentous pulpit-erection, and Mr. Moore subsided into a pew. The service was the reverse of ornate, there being no singing even at the "Glorias," and the reader still giving one the idea that he was pressed for time. One of the grey-headed gentlemen in the congregation took the responses, officiating as amateur clerk, while the dilapidated verger walked about like a wandering undertaker vexed with depression of business at a healthy time of the year.

There was a little unobtrusive lectern at the foot of the pulpit staircase, and I fancied the reader would have read the Lessons from thence; but he remained on the second *étage*, and appeared to find the Hebrew names in the First Lesson—Numbers x.—rather obstacles to his progress. He threw more fire into the Second, and read the dialogue of Herodias and her daughter almost dramatically, but certainly well, showing how nicely the rest of the service might have gone if he had had more leisure at his command. In fact, if I may be allowed to anticipate, this was the idea uppermost in my mind all the time,—what this Golden Lecture might be, and if might, surely should be. I could not help comparing the scanty gathering at St. Margaret's with the crowds that thronged St. Edmund the King's hard by, to hear the eccentric young Anglican monk, Ignatius, deliver himself. Surely, with such an endowment, the Golden Lectureship should draw business men—as I know it did once draw them—from their business by presenting them with an ideal service and sermon. If it does not do so—if men are really so much more material than they were in Canon Melvill's time, then it suggests the further thought why not transplant this lecture to the West? Mr. Moore would have got a congregation—of ladies, at all events—in his own church of Holy Trinity, Paddington. But I am digressing, and perhaps verging on criticism, which latter I am

resolved to eschew, except so far as facts speak for themselves.

When the service was over, I wondered whether we should be included in "choirs and places where they sing." We had not been after the third Collect; but the impetuous gentleman carried us breathlessly on to the prayer of St. Chrysostom before we knew where we were. Then, however, he gave out the doleful hymn, "From lowest depths of woe," which seemed vastly appropriate, however, and which the aged people sang with all the little twiddles and turns and passing notes, as they always do in country churches. We were very primitive and behind the age that day in St. Margaret's. I hope I am not wronging the organist; but I very much suspected that functionary of rushing in to play the *De profundis* for us, and decamping as soon as it was over. Mr. Moore left the pew and retired to the vestry during the hymn, though he was arrayed in full academical costume for the pulpit already. The only change which I could see he had effected was the removal of his gloves during his absence. He then mounted the pulpit, and commenced the first of a series of sermons on the Apocalyptic addresses to the seven Churches of Asia, which we were informed by printed notices in the church would be continued each Tuesday during Lent.

That day was devoted to the Church of Ephesus ;

and Mr. Moore took for his text Rev. ii. 4 : "Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee because thou hast left thy first love." Referring to a previous course of sermons on the subject of the Church of Laodicea, the preacher said that all these addresses to the Asiatic Churches were very instructive to bodies of Christian worshippers, as showing how they were regarded by Him whose eyes were as a flame of fire, in whose hand were the seven stars, and who, to search the heart and test the sincerity, is ever walking amid the seven golden candlesticks. These messages varied in tone ; in some the elements of commendation prevailed, in others that of censure. In the Address to the Church of Ephesus there was much commendation. In no niggard spirit there was set forth what she had done and suffered ; but still there was a great blot on the picture ; a "huge fly"—such was the peculiar imagery employed—had made its way into the ointment of a good name. She had left her first love. Let us, he said, glance at her history. There were reasons why she should take a precedence of all the other Churches. Ephesus was the civil and ecclesiastical centre of the Asia of the Revelations. She was, as she liked to be termed, the "Light of Asia," beyond Smyrna and Pergamos, and the other cities. She was distinguished, in a secular point of view, for her commerce, and for her Oriental and Greek culture. There was the temple of her tutelar goddess Diana. But she was more

distinguished still under a Christian aspect. Thus Ephesus stood out conspicuously. Here it was St. Paul laboured successfully for three whole years. So long a period of his mission life was given to this one place, and his success was attested by the fact of the sorcerers bringing their magical books and burning them. Here the number of converts awoke the selfish jealousy of Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen. Here Timothy was ordained to the episcopate, and Apollos taught. Here, too, the beloved Apostle spent the last few years of his protracted life, when he had left Jerusalem to superintend the Asiatic Churches. Down as far as the second century her bishops had borne faithful witness to the truth; but from this point she had decayed, had gone from dark to dark, until she came to the untraceable blank and void. The glory passed away, and only few relics of her ancient Christianity remained. Attempts had been made on the spot to gather some traces of her former success; but in vain. Modern travellers told us that there were few Turks on the site of ancient Ephesus, and only one Christian! A cloud had passed over the place. Green corn grew amid her ruins; so truly had been fulfilled the words, "I will come quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place."

And yet witness was borne to the self-denying efforts of the Ephesian Church. "I know thy

works," &c. The works are specified; and they are those common to the other messages. This, the preacher said, showed us that no act of self-denial, or resistance to sin, or endeavour after higher life, passed unnoticed. Ephesus was not an idle Church, or an indifferent one, like Laodicea. The people were in earnest for the Gospel of Christ, and for the salvation of souls. What flaw or vitiating element, then, was there? We should see "presently." So far, it was enough for us to know that God might see our good works, and yet know that there was something faulty in them. Men might labour, might compass sea and land, might work night and day, might spend and be spent in a good cause, and yet not be actuated by a right spirit, even as the sons of Zebedee when they would call down fire from heaven. The lesson was that zeal in a good cause, earnestness, devotedness, labours even to fainting, might be no more than "an Ephesian grace." Their practical Christianity received honourable mention as far as it went; but the commendation was neutralized by the words of the text, "Thou hast left thy first love."

The Ephesians were commended for their invincible patience. They had not fainted under rebuke. They had not given up heart and hope when there were enemies on every side. This was still a higher attainment than the former, for it was easier to work than to forbear. Many had the lesson of sitting still

to learn, and found the limits of a sick chamber the boundaries of their mission-field. This was the advanced point of spiritual discipline to which Ephesus had attained.

Again, there was a sensitiveness to all dishonouring companionships: "I know how thou canst not bear them which are evil." Like testimony had been borne in the Epistle to the Ephesians; and after thirty years the lesson had not been forgotten altogether, but still—once and again the text was repeated—she had "left her first love." There was a righteous intolerance of false doctrines, a purging out of all teachers who did not hold "the truth as it is in Jesus," and in keeping all liars out of the apostolate. Such was the honourable testimony borne; but before there was time for congratulation, all was marred by the occurrence of the oft-quoted text, "Thou hast left thy first love." Hence, we could, he said, see the signs and the source of religious declension in the alteration of religious affection, in the leaving of the first love. Let us try how far this holds good with ourselves.

I might mention that by this time the congregation had perhaps increased to thirty; that all wore a stolid, resigned, rather than an interested appearance; and that two of the clerical gentlemen had their eyes fast closed, whether in slumber or deep thought it is not for me to determine.

The preacher then described at length how, on the

early unity of the Christian Church, had grown up the evils Christ Himself had foretold—divisions, heart-burnings, jealousies. Men were no longer of one heart and one soul. They began to live for self, each caring only for himself and his own. The same spirit marked religious declension now; an isolation from the Communion of Saints, a declining sympathy with the trials of God's people, a decay of Intercessory Prayer, and diminished anxiety for souls, limiting spiritual effort to our own salvation. This was the great sign of leaving first love—a lessened interest in the spiritual welfare of others. Then, both in the case of the Ephesians and ourselves, such leaving of the first love was evidenced by a cooling down of the soul's affection for Christ Himself. The love of the first Christians for Christ was no barren feeling, but a sublime passion. It was the ardour of consecrated enthusiasm. The love of Christ constraining him, sustained the Apostle in all he did. "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee," said Peter. "We love Him because He first loved us," the beloved disciple St. John.

He would ask, then, as far as we could recall our first sensations, did not one of the earliest after conversion take the form of personal love and gratitude towards our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Had we not here a central object for faith, love, and joy, so that we could say, "Whom not having seen, we love?" This feeling was deepened by many sacred

memories, by many kind assurances in times of dejection and sorrow, by many deliverances from danger to our own souls. On the bed of sickness we felt Christ's sympathy. He stood by us in danger. If our heart was right we must love Him supremely, with all the freshness of first love.

But how if our heart was not right? We cared less to please Him. We had less delight in thinking of Him and imitating Him. The work of spiritual declension had begun, nay, had advanced. In this case there remains the malediction, "*Anathema Maranatha.*" We are not leaving Christ, but we have left Him.

Once more, the sign of commencing religious declension was when the things of Christ grew less attractive, and we began to give the first place to things of the world. Between going forward and going back the text supposed no medium. The carnal mind was not indifference, but "enmity against God." Therefore we might well take as our first Lenten lesson the warning to the Church of Ephesus. We might see from what a height she had fallen. We could judge what a spiritual Church she was, and yet a few centuries after she had "neither candlestick nor name." At that little "somewhat" the gold changed, one of the seven stars disappeared, and Ephesus comes before us in the way of a warning of the danger of swerving from God. Let us, he suggested in conclusion, be

honest in carrying back our thoughts to some period when our spiritual love was fervent, and testing whether of us too it might not be said that we had "left our first love."

Now, I have quoted more largely from this discourse than might appear necessary, because I wanted honestly to apply it to the case of the Golden Lecture itself. I could see a decided falling away from first love in the case of all save the somnolent clergymen, the volunteer parish clerk, and the devoted maiden ladies. It seemed hard to account for, just as an outsider might have deemed that the sermon meted out "hard lines" to Ephesus. There was evident effort on the part of the preacher to keep to the old grooves and ruts of Evangelical style; but at the same time there was the self-evident fact that these Evangelical attractions did not "draw" as heretofore. Only these faithful thirty stood, or rather sat, faithfully where the hosts used to gather. There was all the old prestige, all the *genius loci*, and no small personal influence on the part of the preacher; for Mr. Moore is a fortunate and, in a certain sense, a famous man. His church at the top of Westbourne Terrace is more than full; but then Tyburnian churches always are, even if golden lectures are a howling wilderness. It is clear that some special attraction is necessary to draw men from their business at the busiest portion of the day. Ignatius does it by his preaching;

and I am told Mr. Rodwell does it at St. Ethelburga's, Bishopsgate, by his advanced Ritualistic service. Mr. Moore simply does not do it at St. Margaret's, Lothbury, with his unattractive, not to say prosy or slovenly service, and his intensely orthodox evangelical discourse. One felt disposed to stir up everything except the dilapidated verger, who appeared to walk restlessly about just in order to avoid becoming subject to the prevailing stagnation, and affording to a scandalized Christendom the spectacle of a sleeping beauty in a snuffy black dress-coat.

This is a terribly practical age, when everybody has to submit to the *cui bono* test, and it is quite certain that a rich endowment like the Golden Lectureship will not pass uncriticised if the clerical Croesus who holds it be not able to entice more than thirty old-fashioned people to Pactolus.

FASHIONABLE EVANGELICISM.

OF all the different Churches of England it had been my lot to chronicle there was none which I pictured so piquantly to my imagination—neither High Church, Dry Church, Low Church, nor Slow Church—as that exceedingly genteel form of godliness of which I had seen some glimpses in my Age of Innocence, when an Evangelical relative bore me, unwillingly, to the shrines of a then rising Molyneux, Noel, McNeile, or Close. Alas! how times change; two out of my celebrities have “secessed;” while the third has been fossilized into a canon, and the last annihilated in a deanery. I lived in Gower Street at the time when I had these infantile “experiences;” and I vow that, to this day, I cannot pass that locality, even in the bowels of the Metropolitan tunnel, without shuddering in the midst of my asphyxia as I recall them. They were excruciatingly genteel and, of course, proportionately uncomfortable.

Symptoms of a return to pristine innocence must, I fancy, have developed themselves in me of late without my consciousness thereof, for on two occa-

sions I have been favoured with a card, of which the following is an exact transcript :—

Mr. _____
and Miss _____ propose (D.V.) to hold a Bible Reading
on _____ Evening, _____, at 7½ o'Clock, when
the Company of Friends is requested.

Subject, Rev. ii.

Reading from 7½ to 9½.

Morning Dress.

I meant to go, but mundane circumstances prevented me, so I suppose I shall never have the chance again. By the way, I did go to something of the kind years ago, and recollect that, after one of the usual talkee-talkie evenings, Bibles were handed round on a tray, like refreshments, and we wound up with prayers. A worldly-minded acquaintance also told me that he got an invitation to something of the same sort once, which, as far as the body of the card was concerned, might have applied to a dance, or even a card-party; but in the corner were the characters, "Tea and P." It was only after lengthened study he gathered that the cabalistic signs stood for "Tea and Prayers."

Experiences, then, of what I would venture to call the Lavender Kid Glove School of Theology, were things of the distant past with me when I proposed to renew them by visiting some shrine of Fashionable Evangelicism. But whither should I go? The world—that is, the western world—of London was "all before me where to choose." There

is plenty of evangelicalism at the East-end ; but it was not of the sort I wanted—not fashionable. There could be no doubt that lavender kids were dying out of the Establishment—scarcely, perhaps, to its loss ; becoming extinct like the Dodo, and giving place to a more masculine and intellectual system. Its last stronghold was in certain Proprietary Episcopal Chapels, clustering in a narrow radius round the Marble Arch. To one of these I would go ; and it was perhaps an unconscious piece of flunkeyism that guided my steps to the particular shrine. I saw that the Rev. J. W. Reeve, of Portman Chapel, Baker Street, was gazetted a Queen's Chaplain. By the way, it struck me what a remarkably eclectic system the Royal theology must be if it was directed by the Royal Chaplains. But this is not to the purpose. Mr. Reeve was a new-fledged regal director, and from his mouth I would hear a fashionable evangelical utterance. I may not see lavender kids upon the hands, but I was sure of the theology that would emanate from the pulpit. So, as Sam Slick says, "I up and went."

Portman Chapel, well known to travellers going south by Atlas omnibuses, is as unecclesiastical looking an edifice as the veriest Puritan could desire. The interior reminded me, for some reason or other, of a County Court ; and the façade surmounting the communion table—I must not say "Altar" now—at the west-end was exactly like a sepulchral monu-

ment at Kensal Green ; but every precaution had been taken to veil its ugliness by the erection of a monstrous bireme of a pulpit and reading-desk right in front. Not knowing that the bireme was located due west, I entered at that extremity, thinking I should be taking the lowest seat in the synagogue ; when, alas ! I found myself among the very *élite*, and the pew-opener, who was a sturdy little woman, looked at me quite fiercely, so that I was fain to beat a retreat, and retire among the livery-servants at the back. There were some beautiful uniforms, and I had every opportunity of observing them, for the sturdy little woman kept me a long time standing—I suppose to punish my presumption. She was not in the least awed by my clerical attire—they never are at Episcopal Chapels—though I had been somewhat careful in my toilette that morning, so as not to look like an undertaker’s man or a waiter out for a holiday. Perhaps I rather overdid it, and the little official thought me “ High.” When she did give me a seat, it was the unkindest cut of all ; for instead of putting me in among the gentlemen’s gentlemen or the pretty ladies’-maids, she handed me into a small deal box, containing three voluminous evangelical ladies, the outside one of whom scowled fiercely as the little pew-opener apologized for inserting me. Not only so, but she walked right outside the box into the aisle, carrying lots of wraps and two huge volumes with her, so as to allow me to pass.

Of course, I was covered with confusion, and also by the evangelical lady when we sat down. She did so with averted face—perhaps she thought I was a Broad Churchman—and never offered me her hymn-book, though it was large enough for a whole pewful; but a nice little girl in the pew in front sympathized with my destitute condition, and handed me back hers.

The curate who was reading the service introductory to the sermon, was a delicate-looking gentleman, with a voice very high up in his head, and a delivery that suggested plums in the mouth. This I find to be a frequent characteristic of evangelical clergymen, and I fancy it is some occult sign of orthodoxy. The school children, who were placed in a rickety-looking gallery fearfully near the roof, sang the *Venite* sweetly; but the *Te Deum* was taken to a tune like "Rule Britannia." The music, however, was above par on the whole. The first hymn, which had a semi-legal refrain, "We have an Advocate Above," was set to the beautiful tune arranged "for those at sea" in "Hymns Ancient and Modern." But "Hymns Ancient and Modern" had no place in Portman Chapel. We sang from the more orthodox Mercer. The second hymn was something about "lowest depths of tribulation," taken to Luther's tune. Then the little pew-opener drew down the sunblinds and the

warm curtains over the doors, and we settled to the real business of the meeting—the sermon.

There was an immense congregation, and the sturdy woman had to bring in camp-stools for serious grooms and awakened footmen. Before the sermon Mr. Reeve came from the communion-table to the reading-desk or basement of the bireme, and read a long notice as to confirmation from the Bishop of London ; in which I was struck by the dexterity with which that prelate avoided any direct statement as to the doctrine of the Established Church on that rite. One party, as we know, elevate it into a sacrament ; the others deny all significance of the imposition of hands. But this by the way. My business is with the sermon.

Mr. Reeve is an elderly, comfortable-looking gentleman, and entered the rostrum in the old-standing costume of black gown, large bands, and double eye-glass, but without the lavender kids. I presume, therefore, they have quite “gone out,” as the ladies say. He read, as his text, words from the First Lesson, Exodus iii. 7 and part of verse 8 : “And the Lord said, ‘I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters ; for I know their sorrows, and I am come down to deliver them.’” I was much surprised to see he was not going to preach extempore, for he bore along with him a ponderous

MS. I should have fancied extemporaneous oratory was a *sine quâ non* at Portman Chapel. I always find it difficult to analyse a very evangelical discourse, but I will do my best.

The preacher began with a picture of the burning bush on Horeb, which he characterized as not only wondrous, but "gracious." He then passed on to an application of the figure to the Church. It should be holy, as the place of God's presence. Moses was bidden to take the shoes from off his feet, because the place was holy. The character of a house depended upon that of its occupant. Now the way in which this fact was communicated showed God's power; but the fact itself showed His grace. He had come to save. It was not because they deserved salvation; it was enough that they needed it. What a view did this give us of the grace of God! It was the same with us that morning. God knew we needed grace. He didn't come down because we were good, but because He was gracious. He would not leave the Israelites one hour too long in Egypt. Four hundred years was the appointed time. Egypt was to be their school, and Pharaoh their school-master. Then the people were brought out with a mighty arm. How this ought to quiet us under discipline. There was a purpose in all things. There was not one tear in the eye of which God did not see the necessity. Only let us rest all on God's "cha-

racter." Then of us, as of Israel in Egypt, it should be true that God would come and deliver us.

Though all were His people, yet some were specially so. In the text His people represented the Church, where the wheat and tares were growing together. The deliverance was common to all, good and bad ; but all did not get to Canaan. So many bad men enjoy some privileges, but yet never get to know full privileges. So there is a Spiritual people, who rest all on grace, accepting salvation in Jesus Christ, patiently waiting in submission to God.

Let us, he said, dwell on that expression, "My people." They were separate from the world. It was even as Christ said, "They are not of the world, as I am not of the world." Yet still God's people were often an afflicted people. In the 5th chapter Pharaoh refused straw, but demanded the full tale of bricks. In the 6th chapter we found the despondency of Israel so great that they "ceased to care." So our heart often failed. But let us look to the history. God was still God, notwithstanding all the troubles of His people.

One would not speak untenderly, he continued. God knows your afflictions (though I must say the congregation looked as little "afflicted" as any I ever saw ; still he harped upon that string). All their afflictions were light compared with that caused by a sense of sin which man could not bear.

This made the Gospel so precious. It was one thing to be cast down by sorrow, but quite another by the sense of sin. Time wore out the one sorrow, but nothing save the Gospel alleviated the other. It was only by the blood of Jesus Christ that a man, weighed down with the sense of sin, was ever made to smile again. If he was brought under the dominion of sin, he soon "ceased to care." Still, whatever was the cry—whether of the blood of Abel, or the sin of Sodom, from the oppressor or the oppressed—God heard and helped. This should be our comfort, "I have seen, &c." God, he said, heard to some purpose where often we did not. Hundreds lived without preaching the Gospel as they ought; hundreds, who were rolling in wealth, did nothing to alleviate misery. They might, perhaps, adopt the cheapest form of all charity, by tossing a little money to the poor. That was not what was meant, "Blessed is the man that *considereth* the poor." It was not enough to give "great lumps" of money. Men might be the very "pink" of morality, the very "pink" of amiability; but as long as their thoughts revolved round self as a centre all this would be as nothing. The text was a comfort for those who were waiting on the Lord. He was not like the gods of the heathen, who had eyes and saw not, ears had they and heard not. He was all-seeing, prayer-hearing and prayer-answering. God's people in the world were in worse than in Egyptian bondage, and God sent his Son for their

redemption, not to *make* us sons, but that we might receive the *adoption* of sons. All the privileges of the New Testament were shut up in Jesus Christ. The question was not what place we deserved, but what place Christ deserved, for Christ took the place of sinners.

“If spared until the evening” (and I must say there seemed every reason to hope it would be so), the preacher proposed to follow out the subject yet further. I did not go, though I trust he was spared. But—if I must be candid—though all this was, I am sure, the very “pink” of orthodoxy, it was slightly uninteresting. One could bear it once in the way; but I marvelled as I looked at that large congregation—the voluminous lady and the serious servants—and thought “those people come here every Sunday.”

There was a collection after the sermon, deferred from the previous Sunday, which the preacher naïvely observed had been wet, so that a good many of the congregation were absent. Then I passed out; and as I did so I was greatly exercised to observe that, despite his proximity to Portman Chapel, one Robinson, who was building a big shop opposite, had placarded it with an announcement, “Robinson will open these premises, &c.,” but in the &c. no symptoms of a “D.V.!”

DR. EVANS AT ST. MARY-LE-STRAND.

THE great temptation against which one has to contend in these sketches of ecclesiastical men of mark is the adoption of something like a *Vox Populi*, *Vox Dei* principle, or the giving a man a place simply because people run after him. I foreswore such a principle at the outset, and studiously took comparatively unknown men in preference to celebrities; and yet it is difficult always to keep to one's resolution. If people would only run after the right men there would be no necessity to do so; but just as the most deserving cases for charity are those which avoid publicity, and which it is almost impossible to find out, so does it often happen that the best men, in ecclesiastical, even more than other walks of life, fail to realize their commercial value, and lie quietly beneath the surface of society, on which some blatant, bombastic nonentity gaily rides afloat.

I remember, when Dr. Evans and I were each of us twenty years younger than we now are, writing an article on him in a then popular but long since defunct magazine, whereinto, after paying what I considered, and still consider, due tribute to his

merits, I infused a great deal of genuine indignation on account of his being only an evening lecturer at St. Andrew's, Wells Street, on exceedingly homœopathic stipend, and—what was still worse—in a sphere much too confined for his energy and talents. Dr. Evans was then, in my estimation, a sort of refined Mr. Spurgeon. Each of those gentlemen was at the zenith of his fame; but Mr. Spurgeon's star was so recently in the ascendant that the Church of England clergyman could scarcely be suspected of imitating him, as I fancy a good many Church of England clergymen have not scrupled to do since. He was the first clergyman I had then known who was able to draw a large congregation of men, old and young. Myself and my old schoolmaster used often to sit side by side in the same pew on a Sunday evening at St. Andrew's to listen to the then somewhat juvenile preacher. Of the service it used to be said by sarcastic young *dévouées* that Mr. Murray sang the priest's part, while Forster laughed at him on the organ. For many years this talented preacher drew vast congregations as a lecturer and a curate, deriving nothing, or next to nothing, but empty honour from his efforts. He was a High Churchman, a very High Churchman for those days, and much too independent and plain-spoken to trim or hide his most extreme opinions. Consequently he had to wait out in the cold a good while; but, in course of time, the authorities were ashamed of themselves,

and shelved him with a Lambeth D.D., and the incumbency of St. Mary-le-Strand, the church opposite Somerset House. Now a City church—or one as near Temple Bar as St. Mary's—requires a good deal of metamorphosing to fit it for Ritualistic purposes: and Strand wardens and congregations are the reverse of æsthetic. Taking all things into consideration, Dr. Evans must have had a trying time of it to make his church as presentable as it is. If the truth must be spoken, it has taken kindly to its new character, and looks almost as though it had been built by Tractarians. It is oakstalled, and richly, but not altogether ecclesiastically, adorned throughout; while the apsidal chancel is quite large enough to accommodate the surpliced choir Dr. Evans has installed there. It is lighted by three handsome stained windows, and a rich corona hangs suspended from the ceiling. The altar is chastely ornamented, with two large tapers and two bouquets of three smaller ones each upon it, as well as a cross or crucifix, I could not see which, for it was Palm Sunday when I paid my visit to St. Mary's, and the sacred symbol was veiled in purple. I cannot imagine what time service begins at this church; I should think it must be at a quarter to eleven; for I got there at five minutes to the hour, thinking I was remarkably punctual, but found they were in the middle of the *Venite*. "Matins," however, form only a sort of prelude to the real service,

which is the celebration of the Holy Communion, for Dr. Evans is an advanced Sacramentarian. He was arrayed in surplice, scarlet doctor's hood, and purple stole, when I entered, and looked rather gorgeous on the whole. There was the same bright, piercing eye that used to scan the vast congregations at St. Andrew's; but the frame was considerably bent, aged, and significant of hard work. When he came to intone the prayers, his voice was musical still, but shaky, and almost more than twenty years older since I heard it last in church. It was a bright, cheerful choral service, though there was no congregation to speak of; and it stopped short after the third Collect, jumping at once to the prayer of St. Chrysostom; the big lion and unicorn over the chancel arch probably standing in place of the "State Prayers." When it was over, the choir went out at the west door in procession, preceded by a cross-bearer, and singing as they went. The clergy passed out at a door in the sacrarium, and the church bell tolled for the mid-day celebration. Shortly afterwards Dr. Evans re-emerged, walked down the nave to the choir vestry, and presently returned with them as before, the curate dressed in rich Eucharistic vestments joining the procession as it entered the chancel. There was a sprinkling of people in the church now; but only a small congregation from first to last. During the absence of the clergy and choir, a youth in a puce cassock had

lighted the two large *bougies* on the altar, and covered everything that could be covered with purple drapery. The curate acted as celebrant, Dr. Evans and the purple-cassocked youth kneeling on either side of him in the Epistle and Gospel places. And here may it be permitted to make one critical remark in the kindest possible way? It is simply this, that full Eucharistic vestments look incongruous with large whiskers, and hair parted down the middle. Some sacrifice must be made when clerical gentlemen go in for Ritualism; and the line between the Church and the world must be drawn at whiskers. Dr. Evans's curate wore large whiskers, which spoilt the *mise en scène*. This gentleman intoned the somewhat complicated service passably well, but made a mistake or two sometimes in the pitch, whereat the choir smiled openly and irreverently. There was one cub of a boy, whose head I felt a most unæsthetic longing to "punch;" for a broad grin suffused his cellar-door of a mouth whenever the curate made a mistake. It is one great disadvantage of the clergy facing East that they cannot see the delinquencies of these irrepressible boys. I am unorthodox enough to think boys out of place altogether. Not only do boys lose their voices before they have any chance of appreciating what they are doing in the service, but woman is so much the other way—so naturally the worshipper. Why has no one tried a choir of sur-

pliced girls? They would improve every year, up to a certain point, of course. At all events, they would not fail just when the trouble had been taken with them. All this, however, *par parenthèse*. I hope Dr. Evans's choir will take the hint, and remember that there is something in a choral service infinitely more important than the music, and that is devotion.

After the Nicene Creed, the banns were published by the curate at the altar rail, and Dr. Evans gave out notices from the pulpit, after which he began his sermon. Taking no text, he commenced by saying that self-examination, which was always a duty, was now more so than ever, when Lent was ebbing away, never to return to some of us. It was a duty not too frequently undertaken; but there was another as important and as infrequent, that was examination, or re-examination, not of self, but of principles. The one more or less involved the other; and it was imperative, lest what had been taken for principles should turn out to be only opinions, or, having been accepted as theories, should remain inoperative. The many were willing enough to talk rightly, and to leave it to the few to act rightly, and to the still fewer to suffer wrongly. They might think, from what he said, that he had been re-examining his principles; and they were not far wrong. He had been doing this with good reason. He then referred to the first years of the "Catholic" revival, now

thirty years old, and spoke of Dr. Newman and those who, at the peril of their persons, undertook the work of Restoration. John Wesley, he said, looking back on his work after a like period of some thirty years, said that his religion wanted restoring. It would be well, too, that we should examine whether we were holding our principles as earnestly as at first.

After long and earnest consideration, which had been forced upon him, he had come to the conclusion that the view taken of the Eucharist was that it was only meant to benefit, or ward off ill from man; but that it was no offering to God, no act of homage. This was about as low and defective a view as could be taken by a royal priesthood of the household of faith; and that such a view could content Church people with a Catholic revival nearly half a century old in their midst, was simply marvellous. The remedy for non-communicating attendance had strangely enough come to be non-communicating non-attendance. [That was a sentence that put us in mind of the old antithetical St. Andrew's sermons.] The people would be scandalized, he said, if priests omitted to celebrate on the chance of "their highnesses'" attendance. "Can you conceive such inconsistency?" he asked. "If your communicating be all, why do you not give notice, as the rubric directs?"

These views, he went on to say, were far more

defective than those of our Evangelical forefathers. How did they speak of the Eucharist? They called it "The Ordinance." They referred to the day of its administration as "Ordinance Sunday;" and they always considered it a high day, though they were not High Church, and the discovery had not then been made that it was not respectable to be a Low Churchman. They spoke of it as commemorating their Saviour's dying love; and this took their thoughts off at once from themselves to Him. They felt they were obeying their Redeemer's dying commands, and this took the act out of the category of will-worship. It was a direct act of obedience to Christ; and that is never without a blessing. True, their Eucharist only came round once a month; but, when it did come, every communicant was present and communicated. "I speak of things which I know, and I testify of that which I have seen," repeated the preacher, very solemnly and emphatically. "If they had felt it their duty to celebrate every Sunday, they would have done it." While such was the case with outlying bodies of Christians, what, he asked, were we doing at this hour? This was the conduct of these men with only their New Testament in their hands. "Yes; but then they don't believe what we do," some might be inclined to suggest; and this was what educated ignorance called argument. Were they not all the more praiseworthy for doing what they did simply because Christ willed and com-

manded it? Which was the worse, he who with higher views omitted, or he who with lower views never neglected, his duty? "Go and do thou likewise," he added, and gave the ascription abruptly, after having preached scarcely more than ten or twelve minutes. It was a striking sermon, with several scintillations of the old style about it, and deserved a better congregation than came to hear it; but it is too true, people don't like plain-speaking or definite doctrine, even when it is of their own sort. I could not help picturing the throngs that could be stuffed into the pews of Portman Chapel that same Sunday morning!

There was no break or pause between the prayer for the church militant and the actual communion office; so that all the congregation, as far as I could see, remained for the celebration, though comparatively few persons communicated. There was a beautiful Eucharistic hymn sung during the administration. Indeed, the whole service was chaste and good, though of course of a very pronounced Ritualistic type. During the cleansing of the vessels and consumption of the elements the *Nunc Dimittis* was chanted, the choir leaving the church in procession to the concluding verses. "*Non est qualis erat*" will possibly be the verdict of those who knew Dr. Evans "in the brave days of old;" but none can hear him without feeling conscious that he is in presence of a man of mark. He deserves a better

locale and a more sympathetic auditory. In the Strand he is the round man in the square hole. Probably the only act of his which unæsthetic parishioners will appreciate is the widening of the thoroughfare in front of Somerset House ; a circumstance which will, no doubt, perpetuate the memory of his incumbency in distant days, when perhaps one of the other Churches of England has got hold of St. Mary's-in-the-Strand, and an "occasional preacher" vents ultra-Calvinism from the pulpit which re-echoed to Ritualistic utterances this present Palm Sunday.

As I left the church I read an announcement that a mission service is held by the curate every Thursday in Drury Lane, to which the poor were invited to come in their "working clothes." This recalled to my mind the title of a volume of sermons by Dr. Evans which I read "ages ago," and liked. It was called "Christianity in its Homely Aspects."

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND "PURE AND SIMPLE."

AMONG the many and various Churches of England with which I have been brought into contact, I have been greatly exercised to find out which was the Church of England *par excellence*. Supposing Lord Macaulay's New Zealander should so far antedate his own existence as to live in the present day, and ask me to take him to a typical Church of the "Establishment," whither should I, and that interesting alien, bend our steps? My process of abstraction seemed to be so exhaustive as to render any subsequent generalization impossible. By the time I had abstracted my Ritualist, my Evangelical, my Broad Churchman, where would be the residuum from which to generalize? The question was solved somewhat unexpectedly for me on Easter Eve of the year of grace 1873 by an article in the *Daily Telegraph* on Easter Church Decorations. The ubiquitous gentleman who does the Churches for that journal, and whom the *Guardian* pictured as a "fearful and wonderful person," informed his multitudinous readers that the Rev. John Robbins, D.D.,

of St. Peter's Church, Kensington Park, was a representative of "the Church of England pure and simple." Eureka! I had found it! My problem was solved, like the Gordian knot, at a stroke. I would lose no time in bringing myself face to face, at this typical Church of St. Peter's, with the purity and simplicity of the Church of England as by law established.

The *locale* of St. Peter's, Kensington Park—which must on no account be called Notting Hill—is best described as emphatically and excruciatingly genteel. If the social hemisphere were divided into zones analogous to the vegetable belts of physical geography, I should call Kensington Park the zone of stucco and veneer. Life in Kensington Park is artificial to a degree; but it is pre-eminently genteel. In such a sphere, some sixteen years ago, did the unecclesiastical-looking fane of St. Peter's grow up, an offshoot from the Gothic St. John's hard by. Outside it might be anything, from a Metropolitan Railway Station upwards; but inside, at least on Easter Sunday, 1873, it was very gorgeous indeed. It is classical to the backbone, a sort of miniature Madeleine; but its comforts, conveniences, and, I am bound to add, its æsthetical beauties, tempt an utilitarian critic to ask, Why are our pure and simple Churches of England so persistently Gothic? It is riddled with galleries, which have the effect of cutting in two its new stained windows;

but then there is the very best answer to the *cui bono* of these galleries, there is an immense congregation, who could not be accommodated without them.

It was choke-full when I got there—I regret to say so late that they were singing the Benedictus ; but the pew-opener was polite to a fault, and insisted on getting me a front-seat, though I professed myself ready to be contented with a window-sill. It was, be it remembered, Easter Sunday, and the Athanasian Creed was *de rigueur* ; but I am bound to say Dr. Robbin’s excellent surpliced choir, aided by the organist, managed to have that sung so as to make it resemble far more the battle-song against which Mr. Burgon so strongly protested, instead of the symbolum it never can be. I could not but smile as I heard the sweet voices of the little boys at St. Peter’s warbling forth the tremendous damnatory clauses, while my little girl, who was with me, looked up in helpless ignorance and asked me, “Papa, what *are* they singing?” The old-fashioned Easter hymn “Jesus Christ is risen to-day” was sung in splendid unison before the Litany, and that was intoned by the precentor, the Rev. T. Evans, with full accompaniment on the organ ; an arrangement which obviated the necessity of that dreadful pulling-up of the pitch, which is sure to occur where the choir, as at St. Peter’s, is an amateur one, however excellent. I fancy the Litany is always a favourite period for

meditation on the part of the worshippers. I have heard that the ladies devote that portion of the service to criticism of their neighbours' millinery. There are twenty minutes safe, without having to stand up or do anything where mistakes can be made. I devoted it to taking stock of this pure and simple Church ; but then with me, *mesdames*, remember, it is a matter of necessity. The heavy Corinthian pillars were painted with a dead flatted red, and the capitals richly gilded, an arrangement which in itself at once made St. Peter's unique, but which is very far from being objectionable. The chancel, once depressed, is now elevated on three steps, paved with encaustic tiles, and separated by a light rail from the body of the church ; the railing being, on this occasion, chastely adorned with flowers for the great Spring Festival. The altar on a foot-pace was vested in white, and surmounted with a beautiful bed of white and red azaleas. Above these were an unobtrusive cross, and still higher, a painted window consisting of a copy of Raffaele's cartoon, "Feed my Sheep." A rich communion service was on a credence table hard by. Everything was refined, and nothing Roman. There were no candlesticks, vases, or other paraphernalia ; and yet all was rich in the extreme. I began to think the *Telegraph* was right, and I had got hold of the ideal Church of England, without any foreign or meretricious adjuncts. The stained glass in the dismembered windows round the

church, though by well-known Gothic artists, was equally realistic. There were no splay-footed saints or impossible backgrounds. They steered a middle course between the grotesque and the commonplace. I decidedly liked St. Peter's. Mr. Evans's intonation of the Litany was like the glass; so was the accompaniment. They were artistically correct, without a symptom of degenerating into a mere musical performance. I really began to think of consulting the polite pew-openers as to the prices of sittings at St. Peter's, only my mind misgave me whether there were any to let; and I also remembered that I myself was a bird of passage, a very Arabian among churchgoers, pitching my tent to-day only to strike it next Sunday.

By another exceedingly judicious arrangement the sermon is placed immediately after the Morning Prayer and Litany, so that the Communion is made an entirely distinct service. A bell is rung to summon those who wish to be present, and those who do not are dismissed "with God's benediction upon them;" not sent off as at most churches in a state of semi-disgrace after the prayer for the Church militant, while perhaps some young curate, with more zeal than discretion, hurls after them the Exhortation to Communion as a sort of "*procul ite profani*." Dr. Robbins—who will, perhaps, pardon my saying he looks remarkably juvenile for an S.T.P.—then mounted an exceedingly ugly pulpit, which I venture to hope

is only temporary, and without note or preliminary prayer gave us an excellent sermon, of which I can only find place for a meagre abstract.

Taking his epigrammatic Easter text from St. Luke xxiv. 39, "It is I Myself," Christians, he said, rested much, and justly so, on the fact that Jesus brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. Reason denied that immortality was a new idea, but Christian zeal in claiming that it was so undervalued the power of natural theology to attain to its discovery. As usual the truth lay between these two extremes. Immortality was no necessary part of a philosophical scheme, and therefore philosophy passed it by, as natural science passed it by now, without denying it, though some systems treated the idea as a mere day-dream. To Christianity it was necessary. Either there was a future life or all its hopes came to nothing. If Christ was not risen then was our hope vain, and we of all creatures most miserable. Christianity was not against reason in this respect, because an instinctive yearning told us that we lived again. There was an aching void in man's heart, and Christ filled it. Before Christianity philosophy had a dim sort of belief, confined to a select few of the rich or learned; but Christ popularized it, and brought it down to the level of the poor and broken-hearted mourner. He made it definite and natural by assuring us that death changes nothing in the individuality of the

person. This, Dr. Robbins said, he would take as his Easter subject.

Humanity waited forty centuries in expectation before this truth was revealed. Neither genius nor faith could have invented the Gospel, or forecast the Saviour's career. Genius would have made it a series of triumphs; mere faith would have pictured Christ only as a greater Abraham or Moses, it could not have imagined Bethlehem, Tabor, Gethsemane, or Calvary. The events associated with these were such as could neither be anticipated nor repeated. And this was even more true of the mystic Forty Days that succeeded. If the New Testament had left off at the empty tomb, what should we have thought of the Resurrection? Whither should we have expected Christ first to go? To Jerusalem, to confront the Sanhedrim? to Pilate, to reproach him with his weak compliance? or to Calvary, with the chosen three, to overthrow the cross, and hurl back the challenge: "If He be the Son of God, let Him save Himself." He went to none of these. Invested with no worldly splendour, He went back to the scenes of the ordinary life He had lived before. He renewed the previous relations with those who had been his companions, the tax-gatherers, the peasants, and the pious women; those who were the true Israelites, Nathaniel-like, "without guile." To these He gave His last directions, to insure the story being truly told. For this He stayed on earth, while

angels and saints waited to lead Him to His throne at God's right hand. "Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end," and therefore He said to them, "It is I myself." So, too, with His habits, He still stood on the silvery strand, and on the mountain side, speaking those gentle words which touch the hearts of little children to this day as no other story one can tell touches them. He had the same power of unveiling hearts; witness the cases of Peter and Thomas. He predicted the old age of St. John, and the crucifixion of St. Peter. All was the same. Death was evidently powerless to touch the spiritual individuality. On the road to Emmaus, He allowed them to press Him to stay, just like an ordinary man; and when by the wounds in His hands He was recognised as He brake the bread, He vanished out of their sight. It was just as it had ever been. He gave them enough evidence to produce conviction, not to compel it. So, too, was it with Thomas; and Peter also was recalled to his Apostleship by the power of love, in the very same place where he had first received his commission. So, again, in the case of Mary Magdalene: to her the Saviour, who had proclaimed that love is both the fruit and the condition of pardon, addressed the first words of the Resurrection, at the door of the sepulchre, whose supposed violation she mourned—"I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." He, the holy ambassador of

mercy and love went to give account of His finished mission to a rebel world, in the courts of the Almighty God of Gods and Lord of Lords.

So, then, to come to consequences. Death, said the preacher, changed nothing in fundamental existence. The organs dropped away, useless as the pen when we ceased to use it. But we could now say, as Christ said then, "It is I myself." Our identity subsisted beyond the grave. Our Master was Himself the proof or guarantee. But how was man to regain the lost image of his Maker, and not only to rise to an individual existence, but to an immortality triumphant and full of glory? Even by the path trodden by his risen Saviour, by the way of the cross :—

"O ! glorious cross exalted high,
Sole emblem of our faith,
Speaking forth from Calvary
Of a loved Saviour's death !
Wondrous tale of love to tell,
Such as ne'er was heard before ;
Give us grace to love it well
And silently adore.

"Ages past have heard that voice
In loving kindness sent,
Truthful souls it bids rejoice
And erring souls repent.
Ages yet to come shall hear
That voice on land and sea,
Lo ! the cross cries everywhere
That Jesus died for thee !

"Yes, for thee, spoilt child of clay,
Thy long-lost soul to win :
Darkest night to turn to day
To guard thy steps from sin.
Thro' the cross thou mayest adore
The Christ who died for all ;
May we ever heavenward soar
Till time be past recall."

"By the way of the cross despised," says an old writer, "is the road of destruction ; by the way of the cross obeyed lies the path to life eternal." "He has left us an example, that we should walk as he walked," and, only if we are made conformable to the likeness of His death, might we hope for the likeness of His resurrection.

What a magnificent destiny was this ! Our eyes were dimmed with the dust of millions of sepulchres, yet "could we be perfect as He was perfect." When our dear ones faded, we could feel sure of meeting them, recognising them, and being saturated with their presence, as we had never been in this life. This was insured to us by sacramental grace. Indeed, they were around us everywhere, in all ages of the world's existence, though unperceived by the dull and heavy senses of mankind, and now they were specially left us in His own ordinances in His mystic body the Church, that so we might, as by external means, become already partakers of the divine nature, and escape the corruption of the world. If this were not so, if the physical and moral nature

were changed at death, it would not be we who should rise. All must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; but how could we say "we" if we were thus essentially different? How could we long for the day when we should throw ourselves at the Great Absolver's feet, and say, "It is I—with all my weaknesses, my temptations, my repentances too soon forgotten, my promises of amendment too soon belied?" How could our works follow us? When our beloved ones died we could not say, "Though they shall not return to me, yet I shall go to them." But it is not so; man *shall* live again: and his first exclamation shall be, "It is I—myself!"

But should the life that succeeded, he asked, be a mere repetition of the present? Not so; the difference presented itself to the mind of St. Paul as analogous to that between the corn seed and the wheat plant. It was the difference between the tiny acorn and the stately oak. The corruptible must then put on incorruption. Yet this would not affect identity. We might call it "progress" rather than "change." Look at man now, "Every inch a King," and yet that man had been once a child, which a mere breath of wind might kill in its nurse's arms—that same wind which he now utilized to turn his mill sails, and speed his ships over the sea. Here the change was but one of progress, and so would it be after death. It would be like the change between Moses in his little ark of bulrushes, and the stately

patriarch with whom God spoke as man speaks with his friend.

We should, he said in conclusion, be hereafter beings with consciences, but without that double nature we now feel within us, "to know the right, and yet the wrong pursue." We shall be worshippers still, but in face of the Great White Throne ; loving still, our love would be pure, our passions purified. There would be no heart-burnings in the world to come. "Think you," he asked, "that those who loved us have died, that their affection has ceased ? No ; or the words of the text would be impossible. If creation be a continuous act, and not a mere transitory and mocking exhibition of the so-called sovereignty of God, I must be able to use those words as my Master used them. If love be the law of God, and progress by love God's object in creation, I must be able to say to them that love me, and they to me, 'It is I.' Such is the magnificent vista of to-day. The grave and heaven, death and immortality, linked together in Christ's revelation. Life is an exercise to fit us for immortality ; our very sufferings have their appointed work ; the cradle is but the passage, the world but a journey ; the grave only the gate ; the end is a home in our Father's courts ; and as we pass each, either with or without Christ, so shall we say with triumphant joy or the bitterest remorse the words of the text, and hear from Him the awful sentence, 'Depart, ye cursed,' or, 'Come,

ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' "

Criticism I have elected to forego ; but I could not help thinking, as I saw that vast congregation file out from St. Peter's, that, apart from all extremes, one might venture to say, in I hope a not very heterodox paraphrase, "there's life in the old Church yet !"

CANON MILLER ON MORAVIANISM.

FROM the rigidity and exclusiveness which are by some persons wrongly supposed to be of the essence of orthodoxy, it is indeed refreshing to turn to any instance where a vital Christianity leads its professors to keep clear of a mistake at once so silly and so ungraceful. If the Church of Rome be commonly represented as a lady in scarlet attire and of questionable propriety, the Establishment too often resembles one of those gaunt wallflowers one sees decorating every ball-room, whose very glance is sufficient to scare mankind from them, yet who assume a *noli me tangere* attitude, as though each one thought herself a Helen, and all the "genus homo" a Paris bent on her destruction. From this coy and maiden propriety the Ritualist and Evangelical cast indeed furtive sheep's eyes at their "Roman" and "Non-conformist brethren" respectively; but it is only coyness; and if the Papist or the Dissenter dare to approach too near, the dear old creature bristles up again, and flies in dismay, like an old and far from graceful fawn.

As I pace the London streets, I find myself regarding every dead wall and hoarding with interest,

to see whether anything orthodox or unorthodox is going to happen within or without the pale of our virgin Establishment. Mr. Willing is my tower of strength, and I run my eye down the list of impending sermons in the Saturday evening papers as a gourmand glances over his bill of fare. Doing so on a recent occasion, I saw that Canon Miller was to preach a sermon on Thursday evening at St. Matthew's, Bayswater, on behalf of the Moravian missions. Now I had always taken an interest in the little congregation in Fetter Lane. I liked to drop in and hear their quaint old chorales, from time to time. There is a warmth and geniality about them, from their minister down to their pew-opener, which is sadly rare, and on which I depend very much in my Bedouin condition of religious worship. I was glad to see Dr. Miller coming to the front in their behalf, and made up my mind I would hear what he had to say about their missions, the story of which I had found as interesting as the Crusoe of my boyhood. Then again St. Matthew's was the very centre and focus of orthodoxy, with a colonial archdeacon for its presiding genius. The little Moravian body in London seemed to start into unwonted promise, when an archdeacon and a canon held out brotherly hands to it from the Church of England as by law established.

Travellers unacquainted with the purlieus of St. Petersburg Place, Bayswater, might easily mistake

the Church of St. Matthew, with its unecclesiastical-looking outlines and queer campanile, for a station of the neighbouring district railway; but on that Thursday evening, the bells which some eccentric old lady has lately bestowed on St. Matthew's—to the discomfiture of the neighbourhood—were ringing out too palpably to permit the error. The ladies flocked thither in goodly numbers, but the male sex was sadly deficient. Altogether the congregation was a sparse one; and as I was shown into a seat unnecessarily in the rear by a grim Gorgon of a pew-opener, with a portentous cap like Mrs. Gamp's, and shawl pinned fiercely round her throat, I felt she was indeed a representative of orthodoxy, and dreaded lest she might deem me a Moravian in disguise, against whose patronage by her incumbent she protested by bolting me into that back pew. The church inside struck me as resembling a chapel that had seen the error of its ways and become converted. A pulpit of dizzy height stood full in front as you entered to the total eclipse of the communion table, if there was one. I never saw it. Inside the rails Dr. Miller was sitting in an old-fashioned black gown, guarded by a little phalanx of charity girls drawn up in open square in the chancel. These sang the hymns and canticles very sweetly. Archdeacon Hunter read the prayers simply and unaffectedly; and altogether there was something very tranquillizing in the whole thing, after the exceptional services at which it is

too often my fate to be present. I always like a week-day service. The ladies do not seem to have on their best bonnets, or the atmosphere to be redolent of light kid gloves and gentility. It is like going to a cathedral in the heart of the week. When I do drop in, I always look with a sort of awe on the regular congregation, and think "How good these people ought to be!" There were indeed one or two symptoms of St. Matthew's recent conversion. The chancel was diapered all round the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments in the vulgar tongue, and the reading desk had slid away from its position under the precipitous pulpit, as if it had been at a dark *séance* and got "moved," leaving the rostrum high and bluff as the rock of Gibraltar.

When service was over, and we had sung the inevitable hymn "From Greenland's icy mountains, from India's coral strand," the lights were raised for the sermon, and a vergers conveyed the Doctor up the ascent as though to guard him against mischief on his Alpine excursion. He might have recited "Excelsior" *en route*, but did not, at least not audibly. As a rule, charity sermons are a delusion and a snare. The preacher reads the collect for Quinquagesima Sunday, and takes some stock text which he twists round more or less violently at "thirdly ;" you give your threepenny-piece if there are offertory bags, your shilling or half-crown if it is an open plate, and go your way, forgetting what manner of sermon it

was ; but Dr. Miller's was terse, logical, and to the point. It was worth reporting ; and I report it in miniature. It was preached fluently, without notes, and with just enough gesticulation to make what was said comprehensible. Taking his text from 2 Cor. xiii. 4, "Though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God," the preacher said there was an immediate scope of these words which was local and personal, applying to those who impugned the apostleship of St. Paul, whilst he vindicated his claim in this particular epistle, comparing his own position with that of Christ, who often as it were held back the powers of the Godhead in His incarnate nature during His life and ministry on earth. The context, "for we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you," had been wrongly interpreted as applying to a future life, whereas they were merely written in allusion to local circumstances. "We," that is "I," kept back my power, "but I shall live with Him." This, again, was explained by v. 2. "If I come again I will not spare." As much as to say, if those impugnors of my apostleship remain obstinate, I shall put forth my power. We know, he said, what this referred to ; the exercise of Church discipline, whereby the offender was handed over to Satan, a sentence which would no doubt be ratified by God in the infliction of some bodily chastisement. Such was the imme-

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diate meaning, said the Canon, and it could not fail to strike me how complacently he accepted this tremendously sacerdotal explanation ; but the Apostle rose from this to a great general truth, in following out which a gradual order was necessary. It was as important to believe in the true humanity as in the deity of Christ. The true humanity of our Lord was as necessary a qualification for His being our Saviour as was His Godhead. Sin only excepted, as being no integral part of humanity, Christ was a real man. So we found in Him all the sinless weaknesses of humanity. A long journey, or a hot sun in that Eastern climate, had the same effect on Him as on any ordinary man. Except during the supernatural fast of forty days, His body was nourished with food like our own. So among the death agonies on the cross was included the deep thirst. All this culminated in the ability to die. Yet this was the leading idea ; underlying this were glimpses of power. He was so weak as to be unable to save Himself against a few soldiers sent to take Him, and yet they all fell to the ground. He said He could pray to His Father, who would send Him twelve legions of angels. So in the dream of Pilate's wife, there was an evidence of supernatural power at work. At His death there was the great symbolic incident of the rending of the temple-veil. All along there were glimpses of power in combination with weakness. Then we came to the Resurrection of Christ in power. Sometimes

the Resurrection was ascribed to the Father, as being the work of God on the Son of Man. Sometimes it was ascribed to, or claimed by, the Son. Jesus assumed the power of self-resurrection, when He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Under either aspect, it was an exercise of the power of God. Passing from Easter to Ascension-tide, we came upon a new phase of work, upon new offices, and a new energy of Christ. He undertook the effusion and diffusion of the Holy Spirit. He was the Great High Priest within the veil. Hence He was the source of life and author of salvation. Our life was hid with Christ in God. This applied not only to present, but future life, and would be consummated, when at Christ's second coming our bodies should be raised, and our souls brought from Hades or Paradise. Life in Holy Scripture was a great word, and embraced both these stages. Paul never wrote a grander truth than that "your life is hid with Christ in God." We must understand that all life out of Christ was only death—intellectual, physical, social, or political. There was no life before God, save that which was lived by union with Christ.

Thus we might pass on to the immediate subject under consideration. We had got at a principle. We had evolved a law, apparently paradoxical, as many of God's laws were, of combined power and weakness in the Gospel. We saw the law at work in Christ's

own ministry. Weak as He was, He cured disease by a touch, gave sight to the blind, made the deaf to hear and the dumb speak, cast out devils, raised the dead, and, by the moral force of His utterances, made those who were sent to take Him say, "Never man spake as this man." It was so afterwards. It was an insignificant handful of men sent out to convert the world; and yet, as Paley said, they overthrew every idol and temple. They paraded their own disgrace by preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified. As a great preacher, still in God's mercy spared to us, said, this was, in plain, honest English, preaching a man who had been hung. Of course this was a stumbling-block to Jew and Greek. And so it was still—power in combination with weakness. "What," he asked, "can we do by our preaching? We have no more power to convert your souls than we have to stand at a grave and tell a dead man to rise. We are simply agents, and here is the law again discernible—the weakness of man working, but at the back of it the power of God. We can only keep clear of the devil and disgrace by the same grace as stands in stead the weakest of those we address." Passing on thence to the object of his special appeal, Canon Miller said if his hearers knew anything of the Moravians, they would be aware that this law of which he had been speaking never had a more marvellous illustration. Their origin took us back beyond the Reformation, and they had been almost extin-

guished by the cruelty of Rome ; but in the eighteenth century they revived. They possessed in a special degree the two marks of an Apostolic church, missionaries and martyrs. There had been no such missionaries since the time of the Apostles as the Moravians. This was no transitory effervescence, but a staid missionary spirit. They were, in fact, a warning to us that if there was life in our Church it must take this shape of mission-work. As an instance of their self-denying zeal, he quoted the case of two Moravian missionaries, who were ready to sell themselves as slaves, so as to get at slaves. They were working amongst the very lowest class of Hottentots, and even amongst the lepers in the East. A Moravian brother and sister were in attendance at a hospital, devoted to this most loathsome of diseases. For a hundred and two years their ship, the "Harmony," had gone out year after year to the icy regions of the far North. It might not be deemed superstitious if he took this as a sign that God blessed their work. They had been in friendly communion with the Church of England for many years. There was this special advantage in helping the Moravians that, when it could be done without sacrificing fundamental principles, it was good to help others. No large-hearted Christian would grudge assistance to those who had been so markedly helped by God, in their great work of evangelizing the world.

It was, I confess, a new sensation to hear a clergy-

man—more especially a dignitary of the Church of England—plead the cause of a body other than the Establishment. We are living in strange times, when all sorts of time-honoured institutions are becoming obsolete. Possibly, though it sounds Utopian to say so, our remote descendants may live to see grown into an anachronism the now too prevalent odium theologicum. At least, I seemed to get some far-off glimpses of such a millennium, when I listened, that quiet Thursday evening, to Canon Miller on the Moravians.

MR. STOPFORD BROOKE ON BYRON'S
"CAIN."

THE Liberal Churchman is always fain to protest when he is obliged to use the words orthodox and unorthodox. Make the terms as elastic as he may, the writer who employs them introduces of necessity a theological, if not a polemical, element into what may profess, and honestly essay, to be only a descriptive account of service or sermon. But surely it is possible to look at these matters in a social, and not at all in a theological way. It is so I endeavour to make my Sunday excursions among the different places of worship in London, reversing the motto, "Measures, not men," and singling out for notice men of mark, no matter to what body they belong. Though having, of course, my own opinions, and holding them, I dare say, as tenaciously as other people, I am for the nonce innocent of all distinction between orthodoxy and heterodoxy. My mind is a *tabula rasa* prepared to receive impressions, come they whencesoever they may. It was in such a spirit I scanned one Saturday evening the ecclesiastical bills of fare for the morrow. Should I go and hear Canon Lightfoot demolish the drama at St. James's, Piccadilly, or Father Ignatius

discourse on "Nineteenth Century Devils" at St. George's Hall? Should the Rev. Capel Molyneux entice me to a "Liturgical Service," or Mr. Voysey allure me with his "Sling and Stone"? The world of ecclesiastical London was all before me where to choose my place of rest. My only difficulty was an *embarras de richesses*, but I finally decided in favour of Mr. Stopford Brooke, at York Chapel, St. James's, who for several Sundays had been lecturing on Theology in Shelley, and on the preceding Lord's Day had commenced an equally untheological poet, as far as popular estimation goes—namely, Lord Byron. That particular Sunday was to be devoted to the study of Cain; and it struck me that to get theology out of either Byron or Cain was a somewhat hopeless task; but to get it out of the two together—out of Cain as represented by Byron—was about as original an idea as the extraction of poetry out of Coke upon Lyttleton, or Stephens's edition of *Blackstone*, would be.

Unightly as to its exterior, York Chapel, St. James's, looks within like a Quaker establishment, so uncompromisingly drab has it been painted over every square inch of its surface. It is ugly and old-fashioned, with cavernous pews, and queer oil-lamps slung up at rare intervals. An effort has been made to adapt it to modern taste by squeezing a few oaken stalls into the chancel, but they look out of place, and over the little depressed altar rises a funny

basso relievo like a miniature Parthenon. There are capacious galleries all round, and the front of these, as well as the roof of the building, is covered all over with fidgety little drab festoons. But then one did not come to York Street for architectural beauties. A goodly congregation filled the douche-baths of pews, and by-and-by a tiny procession of surpliced boys and men—only a half-dozen in all—came from the west end of the chapel to the oaken stalls, and in its rear followed Mr. Brooke, who took his place in a stall too, and read a very short form of evening prayer, the choir responding musically, though somewhat too ambitiously for their slender numbers. During the whole of this service, which was evidently looked upon as only preliminary to the lecture, people kept dropping in, and by the time it was over the basement was full. There was a far larger proportion of men than one generally sees in a congregation, but an adequate contingent of ladies too, and I could not see that they looked in the least strong-minded females.

Having ascended the pulpit in surplice, hood, and stole, Mr. Brooke read the staple collect, "Prevent us, O Lord," &c., and then proceeded to his subject. Byron, he said, was less interesting than Shelley, because he was more selfish and personal. Shelley's range was larger and more human. With him personal theology was a secondary matter. He argued, If the whole of humanity be right, I, as part of it,

shall be right. If God Himself is just, He will be just to me. That was how Shelley would have spoken had he been a Christian. Shelley was always going out of himself for man; but in Byron the interest was overridden by his gigantic personality. He was interesting, as all vivid self-representation must be. It was, in fact, a curious question why we did not weary of finding Byron over and over again in his works. We should weary if he were not so intensely modern, so thoroughly of the present day. In describing himself he described so much more than himself. He was a type of his own modern world. Shelley represented men as he thought they ought to be, and the world as he believed it might be; and so, in proportion as people were practical or ideal, they would prefer Byron or Shelley respectively. Shelley had to speak or his heart to break; but he lost self in the expression of his deepest self—the very highest mark of genius. Byron seemed always to retreat from the canvas to see how self looked when he had painted it.

The fatalistic theology of Calvinism in which Byron was brought up encouraged this self-contemplation. Dooming a great portion of the world to destruction, it produced either despair or indignation. Some natures it made take pride in their isolation, and say, "Fate, I thank thee I am not as other men, believers." This type of character had its representation in Cain. The man was filled with

this dark, haughty, indignant pride. The theory of Shelley was that, when he passed away, his individuality would be lost; and, however infidel this doctrine might be, it was far less selfish than Calvinism. It could not lead to Pharisaism. It would have been impossible for Shelley to have written *Cain*. There was the widest difference between that and his "*Prometheus Unbound*." Again, there was in Byron a belief in original guilt, in an infection of nature which could not be got rid of unless God interfered. Shelley said all that was evil in him was of the nature of an usurper, and could be got rid of. He was in this respect infinitely nearer Christianity than Byron, even without believing in original sin.

Cain was a vivid concentration in one poem of the results of such a doctrine. Others might rest satisfied with the Augustinian theory; but Cain felt all the unsolved problems—What was evil? Why was there death? Why did God make us so cruelly? What sort of a God could He be? This gave us a most interesting insight into the character of Byron. If he did not feel these doubts, he evidently sympathized with those who did, for they recurred continually in his poems. And the temperament of Cain was, the lecturer said, common now as pebbles in the field. It was a direct result of Calvinism; and scarcely a week passed but he was brought face to face with such questionings. At their very root lay

the fatalism of the Calvinistic system, and the doctrine of original sin. How could a man feel who believed, and yet detested those doctrines? Of all things said by pious people to sceptics, the most foolish was that scepticism was a crime; whereas it was only the logical inference from Low Church theology.

How often men said this—"God's power is His only law. I am condemned for Adam's sin, and I am bound to say it is just. Is power necessarily good? Why was I born? I did not ask to be. I will not bear it patiently. There is nothing for me to love." What wonder was it that men rushed into Infidelity and Atheism? Their noblest feelings were outraged, and there were only two courses, either to find a nobler theology or to become like Cain. And yet Byron rightly represented Cain as good and lovable. Adam simply did not think of these things; but Cain did. And when this was said the dogmatic answer came that all these traits of character were not good—were only splendid sins. "I call that detestable teaching," said Mr. Brooke, "to look on the good and call it evil. It is the sin against the Holy Ghost."

What wonder, he asked, if men rushed into immorality when the power of loving God was taken from them, and they felt compelled to *hate* God? The whole soul became devilish, because God was represented as a devil; and no channel being left for the

highest love, the whole man turned to the intellectual sphere. If he cannot love he will know. There could be no rest until all was clear to the intellect. God was made hideous by a dreadful theology, and the love of God being gone, only thirst for knowledge remained ; but intellect could not touch these questions. And yet this was the common position of educated men. It was nothing less than a mutilation of their humanity. The only remedy was a teaching of theology which would enable men to love God again. It seemed as though Byron wished to teach that knowledge without love gave only increased power of doing ill. Lucifer gibed against Cain's love for Adah and his child, and nothing could be finer than the fight of human affection against the tempter. But the mischief was done. Human love was overwhelmed ; Cain lived years in hours. At last all reverence, faith, love, and hope were gone. In Abel he found once more the representative of apathetic piety, and the deed was done. At last he knew what death was. "Look on that deed," he concluded ; "you who are teaching doctrines that take all the goodness out of God, and ask yourselves what you are doing."

Strong words, perhaps ; but words that set one thinking. Dainty carriages waited to convey the hearers home, and bearded men passed out of the queer little slummy chapel with signs of thought upon their brow other than those that often mark

the hearers of sermons. For the life of me I could not help thinking as I passed up Piccadilly and saw the throngs coming out of St. James's after Canon Lightfoot's diatribe against the drama, I wonder how many Cains there were in those congregations!

A SERMON TO MEDICAL STUDENTS.

THERE is a seeming disadvantage in the adoption of a title such as mine, for it appears to cut one off from the consideration of individuals or societies which fail to satisfy the arbitrary definition of orthodoxy, or the reverse, based on their conformity or nonconformity with the National Church. The seeming drawback, however, is more than compensated by a real advantage. In these days of railroad speed, it is something to have selected titles which shall at once attract readers to subjects likely to be congenial with their tastes, and warn them off from contrary topics. Without for one moment venturing to define orthodoxy or heterodoxy, or to pronounce in favour of one or the other, the titles have been all along used in the most vague and popular manner, as implying only connexion on the one hand, or nonconformity on the other, with the Church of England as by law established. Now whilst to a large, and perhaps increasing, body of readers the mere absence of such conformity constitutes a bond of sympathy, there is another and far from inconsiderable class who limit their interest in religious questions of the day within the bounds of

the Church of England—who simply, without of necessity being bigoted or exclusive, feel their sympathies bound up indissolubly with the National Church, in the more restricted sense of the word, having neither time nor inclination to busy themselves with those numerous bodies and widely varying schools of religious thought which lie outside.

Some years ago, during the progress of the now historic “Twelve Days’ Mission,” religious London was startled out of its complacency by the tidings that the mantle of Whitfield had fallen upon the shoulders of a young preacher in the Established Church—the Rev. George Body, then curate of St. Peter’s Church, Wolverhampton. There was more than the mere fact to render such a phenomenon worthy of notice; for this rare gift of preaching was found in connexion with a school of thought in the Church which had, rightly or wrongly, been supposed to depreciate in some degree the use of preaching, and to rest rather on the sacerdotal and sacramental functions of its ministers. The *locale* of Mr. Body’s ministrations was the unlikely one of All Saints’, Margaret Street. Two gentlemen only—if even these—had essayed to “prelude the way” in which Mr. Body was going: Dr. Evans, now rector of St. Mary’s-in-the-Strand, and formerly evening lecturer at St. Andrew’s, Wells Street; and Mr. Stanton, of St. Alban’s, Holborn. But Mr. Body

appeared to many to combine in a remarkable degree the qualifications of each of these gentlemen; the clear logical precision and pure eloquence which drew such large congregations to hear Dr.—then Mr.—Evans, at Wells Street, and the unmistakable zeal and impetuosity which marked, and still mark, Mr. Stanton's preaching at St. Alban's, Holborn. Such, in brief, are the public antecedents, during the last few years, of the somewhat noteworthy gentleman whose sermon I have selected for my present paper. It should be added that, presumably in recognition of his powers as exhibited during the Mission, an ecclesiastical benefice was at once offered to Mr. Body by Lord Faversham, and by him declined; but he has since accepted preferment at the hands, I believe, of the same patron.

The following announcement in a clerical paper appeared to me to mark a noteworthy epoch in current Church history, and, at the same time, to afford a good opportunity for a notice of Mr. Body: "All Saints', Margaret Street, Wednesday next.—Festival of St. Luke.—A service for the Brotherhood of St. Luke, the Physician and Evangelist, will be held at seven P.M., with a sermon by the Rev. George Body. The Brotherhood will hold a conference after the service on the means of promoting the moral and spiritual welfare of medical students. Students, practitioners, and others interested in the subject are requested to attend." Accordingly, long before

the appointed time I made my way to Margaret Street, and as early as a quarter-past six I found a considerable crowd assembled at the doors of the church. Of course, the ladies were in the majority, though I am free to confess that I do not believe all, if any, of those ladies were either medical practitioners or medical students. By the time the service commenced the sexes were pretty evenly balanced, and the congregation was large, though not crowded. There was a fair sprinkling of those who looked like medical men, and a few who might pass for medical students, but scarcely the type, *pur et simple*, who will probably gain their first information of the proceedings from these pages. The "Brethren of St. Luke"—if such they were—are a very exceptional order of medical students indeed—quite a new creation since the days of Mr. Bob Sawyer and Mr. Benjamin Allen. The service was an ordinary choral one, of no very ornate character. The clergy, six in number, including the Rev. A. H. Mackonochie, Rev. Upton Richards, and the preacher, were habited in short surplices with red stoles, and walked in procession from the vestry, preceded by a cross-bearer. The processional hymn was "Onward, Christian soldiers," sung to a tune from one of Haydn's symphonies.

At the conclusion of Evensong Mr. Body ascended the pulpit and preached, at considerable length, from the text, Colossians iv. 14, "Luke, the beloved

physician." He first proceeded to sketch briefly the few particulars known of the life of him whom, by a singular *lapsus*, he once or twice during the discourse termed the Apostle and Evangelist. St. Luke was born, he said, probably at Antioch, which was midway between the great medical schools of Alexandria and Cilicia, at one of which he no doubt received his education. Tradition made him belong to the Seventy Disciples, and even fixed on him as one of the two met by Christ on the road to Emmaus ; but the opinion of Tertullian was probably nearer the truth, when it set down St. Luke as the convert of St. Paul at Antioch. His subsequent history was not known, neither could it be positively asserted that he died a martyr's death ; but, wherever and however he died, he died "enveloped in the odour of sanctity." St. Luke had special qualifications for that companionship with St. Paul which we find running through the Acts of the Apostles. In the first place, he could share Paul's sympathy with Gentile converts ; and secondly, he had, like St. Paul himself, a liberal education. So was it that he was chosen to give St. Paul's gospel to the world. In that gospel there were evident traces not only of the liberal, but even of the medical, character of his training. "Whilst this man was practising a profession like yours," said Mr. Body, addressing specially the medical element in his congregation, "a vision burst

over his path, which, without removing him from his former calling, sent him forth to advance the cause of Jesus and the good of human souls. This is the picture Luke's life affords us—the physician's life lived, the physician's toil toiled, beneath the shadow of the throne of God." Dwelling on the fact that St. Luke did not abandon his profession after his conversion, the preacher asked why should he give up that "grand profession?" Where could he realize a better idea of creaturely—that is of angelic—existence, toiling for man with the gaze fixed on God? After drawing a graphic picture of the nobleness of the physician's calling, he set down as the ideal of that calling the toil for man's good with "the gaze riveted on the face of God." There were, he said, many special reasons for endeavouring to realize this great ideal. Nothing could be more disastrous for society, for the Church, or for medical men themselves, than a divorce between their calling and faith in God. First as to society, he reminded his hearers how they had entrance into English homes from palace to cottage, and how their position made them confessors to whom burdened hearts were opened. If their influence was to be healthy, the moral character of the profession must be kept up. Let the suspicion of that mental sin of which we were beginning to recognise the possibility exist, and, though the door might still be open to the medical man for the sake of his skill, he would no

longer be the friend or confessor, but only the servant of the public. This would be the case if science was divorced from religion. His hearers might be inclined to tell him that some of the leaders in so-called liberal thought had, to a certain extent, made this divorce; but these, he would remind them, were exceptional men, and you could not expect from the majority of medical men and students, any more than you could from the general body of the clergy, those powers of restraint which exist in a few prominent individuals. You must expect only a moderate degree of moral as of intellectual strength. There were special temptations incidental to the medical calling more than to any other. There was, then, only a moderate degree of strength to be expected, and there were "intense temptations." Individual morality, therefore, must be secured by supernatural motives. So, too, with regard to the Church. St. Luke was the companion and helper of St. Paul; and it was only a truism to remark what a blessing in a populous parish was a medical man who would *pity* the priest, and labour with him. "You," he said, "can drop the word of warning when danger is at hand; and immediately the barred door is opened to the priest—opened through your casual word."

There were two ways especially in which members of their profession might help the priest. First: In a study which must force itself on the mind of the

priest more and more every day—namely, the “Pathology of the Spirit.” He was convinced that disease was in almost all cases a type of sin. There were palsies and dropsies and fevers of the spirit as well as of the body. “The principles on which you would deal with the body would help me in dealing with the soul. There must be laws of spiritual as well as of natural pathology. You,” he added, “can be our masters, whilst we are classifying the diseases of the spirit, if you will only meet us on the ground of faith in a common Master.” Secondly : There was another point in which the medical man could aid the priest—namely, in discriminating those diseases incidental to times of religious revival. Mr. Body instanced the cases of the Flagellants in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and the Irish revival a few years ago ; and said that, as our mission work proceeded, we should probably meet more of these phenomena. Here the medical man might help the priest, who was often puzzled to know where the spiritual manifestations ended and the physical began. But to do so the medical man must believe in the supernatural. Only from the medical man who was the child of faith could the priest accept guidance. Lastly, as to medical men and students themselves, and the dignity of their calling : tracing this from its earliest mention in Egypt, where the physician embalmed the body of Jacob, the preacher indulged in a quotation from Homer on the subject :—

Αἰγυπτίῃ, τῇ πλείστα φέρει ζείδωρος ἄρουρα
φάρμακα, πολλὰ μὲν ἐσθλα μεμυγμένα, πολλὰ δὲ λυγρὰ·
ἰητρὸς δὲ ἕκαστος ἐπιστάμενος περὶ πάντων
ἀνθρώπων· ἥ γὰρ Παιήονος εἰσι γενέθλης·

Odyssey, iv. 229—232.

In the Incarnate this ideal of the physician was realized. It was for the medical profession to extend His ministry to these times and to this land. He went about healing sickness and disease. They were treading in His very steps. They were God's own "natural priests." Their gifts were like the "orders" of the priest; their medicines—God-given medicines—like the holy bread and the chalice. The surgery was God's own temple, the table God's altar, the drugs were visible signs of God's own sacraments, they themselves God's own priests. If this grand ideal was to be realized, they must be clean, as those who bear the vessels of God.

Finally, it might be asked, how? There was only one way: the Son of Mary. A motive was wanted; a sacrifice had to be made, especially on the part of medical students. The preacher had been privileged to see something of their life. If they were going to live for God, some good, strong motive was necessary to enable them to resist temptation. Power and grace were needed. "Go to the blessed Sacrament," he said, "and thou shalt have strength to realize thine ideal." Nay, a deeper need was met. Some young man might say, "How dare I come to Christ?" "I almost wish," said the preacher, in this most

effective portion of his address, "that I only had one-half of my congregation here"—alluding to the presence of the ladies—"so that I could speak of things I dare not speak of now. But I would stake my life there is some young man here now who, in the power of sin and uncleanness, feels it impossible to love God. 'How *can* I love God,' he asks, 'when my flesh is defiled, when my thoughts are unclean, and poison my very rest at night? I can't live for my God. Unclean! unclean!' He can meet it. He can meet even that case. He can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. I know it. He does it day by day. Put yourselves under the discipline of penance. Confess. Come to the pure Son of Mary. So shall your soul be cleansed in the crimson tide that flows from Jesus, and you shall be emancipated from the power of this horrid sin."

The sermon was concluded by an eloquent appeal to young men to join the Brotherhood of St. Luke. A conference of the fraternity was held in the school-room after service, and the offerings in the church were appropriated to the All Saints' Convalescent Home at Eastbourne.

ORTHODOXY AT THE "HALL OF SCIENCE."

THOUGH I started these papers with the avowed object of visiting the different London churches as the likeliest places to find the representative men of the Church of England in the metropolis, still there is nothing in my project which need prevent my seeking them elsewhere, if elsewhere they seem likely to be found. My object is to note the salient points of orthodoxy—that is, of course, my own “doxy” at the present moment; and I believe no more characteristic feature could be found than that which it is the object of the present article to describe—namely, the operations of “The Christian Evidence Society,” carried on in the Hall of Science, Old Street—the very centre and focus of metropolitan Atheism. And there is a further consideration which makes the subject an eligible one. It may safely be affirmed that the British public has an instinctive reverence for “pluck.” When the British public used to read the extremely graphic account of a “set to” in *Bell's Life*, it was not so much that it was a bloodthirsty British public as that it liked to be informed as to the bearing of two

highly-trained pugilists put face to face with each other, and nothing but their own brawny fists to rely upon. The Church Militant has of late been studying this noble art of self-defence; and the sympathies of the aforesaid British public go along with it; for it likes to see the Church able to stand its ground, and not forced to be propped up and taken care of like an elderly female in scarlet attire. As long as the Christian Evidence Society confined its labours to St. George's Hall with audiences of ardent admirers and periodical issues of pretty books, that part of the British public that required evidences viewed its proceedings with as languid an interest as they read of an ancient tournament compared with a modern prize fight. But when the Society, setting aside its apparatus of bishops and dignitaries, put its working clergy to the front, men who knew the exact difficulties of the working man, and above all when they met those men on their own ground, then the community began to say, "These people are in earnest. This is no rose-water theology. This means business. I shall go to the Hall of Science, and hear what there is to be said on both sides." That is how I put the matter to myself; and one Thursday evening I carried out my resolution and went. I had no difficulty in finding the *locale*. I went to the Aldersgate Street Station of the Metropolitan Railway, and asked of a cheery-looking man, who was lighting his cigar outside the

station, which was the way to Old Street. Now I might have been bound for the St. Luke's Lunatic Asylum, which is in the same street, but the man looked at me over his temporary cloud and answered, American fashion, "Are you going to Bradlaugh's place?" Being informed that I was, he volunteered to accompany me, and we went together. *En route* we fell in with a fellow idiotically drunk, who was fighting a lamp-post; and this so took my friend's fancy, that he forgot the other sort of polemics, and parted company with me. Time was nearly up, however, so I went on; and, as John Bunyan says, "I saw him no more." There was quite a little crowd outside the Hall of Science. I fancy they must have been waiting to see what the expected "parson" was like; for only about six rows in the room were full. The Hall is a commodious but unpretending building, looking like two railway arches thrown into one with unadorned zinc roofs. A gallery runs round the building, labelled "Members' Gallery;" and the front was mildly decorated with little landscapes which seemed to represent scenes from the weekly excursions of the Sunday League. There was a high rostrum at the further end, with a table for the chairman, and above it a large announcement on linen of a forthcoming set-to between Father Ignatius and Mr. Bradlaugh, for the following Thursday.

Most of the men assembled seemed of the legi-

timate working class. The billycock hats were in the proportion of fifty to one "topper." Many of the men were quite young ; and there were a few—very few—women. A little quiet argumentation was going on, but all in cool blood. They rigged me up a temporary table by laying two forms across trestles, in deference to my journalistic intentions ; and soon after I had got my paraphernalia ready, the lecturer and his friends came in—three clergymen and one military-looking layman. Two other young men, who I fancy were some officials connected with the place, were the only other occupants of the platform. One of the clerics, the Rev. J. H. Titcomb, took the chair, and another, in a very nasal twang, offered up a prayer, consisting of the collect, "Prevent us, O Lord, &c.," and the Lord's Prayer. The chairman then introduced the lecturer, the Rev. R. B. Girdlestone, a black-bearded, muscular-looking Christian, who drew forth a small roll of MS., and proceeded at once, to business in a clear, manly delivery, which seemed to set him at one with his audience directly. Your British workman hates to be simpered at, and likes a man to "speak up," whatever he has to say.

Mr. Girdlestone's subject was "the Metaphorical Language applied to God in the Old Testament ;" and he began by saying that he approached the subject, not as a controversialist, but as an inquirer. He would keep before him during the evening only

the one question, "What is Truth?" He entered on no discussion as to the existence of a God. Taking that for granted, his question strictly was as to the mode in which God's works and character were set forth in certain Hebrew books, common to Jews and Christians alike. God's existence was assumed as a hypothesis in these books, therefore there was no argument on that point in Scripture. Taking that for granted, it was necessary that there should be some specific way of making known God's works and attributes, and the special method chosen was that of metaphor. The teacher must adapt himself to his scholars; and the gulf between God and man was so great that there was much truth of which we could not take cognizance. Now, the senses had been termed the windows of the soul; but these were often barred up. If other organs had been bestowed upon us, we might have been conscious of a great deal of creation which was now undreamed of in our philosophy. In this respect the microscope might be said to be the vehicle of a new revelation. It was specially adapted to sight; and so God adapted Himself to the existing faculties of man. If we talked to a blind or a deaf man, we must adapt ourselves to their defects; so, too, God, in unfolding Himself "must" do so in the terms of the finite. But, it might be said, all language is too material to represent God. God—if he be a God—is not material. The Bible represents him as if He

were ; and therefore the Bible is not trustworthy ; or again, God is sometimes represented as material, sometimes as spiritual in the Bible ; both cannot be true, and therefore the Bible is false. The lecturer then passed in review many passages where bodily organs, &c., were attributed to God, as when he walked in the Garden, talked with Moses, took off Pharaoh's chariot wheels. Were these, he asked, consistent with the spirituality of God ? We must consider (1) that the books were ancient and addressed to a people of different mental calibre from our own ; (2) that they were Oriental and figurative ; (3) that many of these expressions occurred in the poetical parts of Scripture ; (4) that we read them in a translation which often failed to convey the exact idioms of the original ; (5) therefore, if the ways of God were to be made intelligible, it must be by means of metaphor. He noticed such metaphors in our common language, such as " even-handed justice," " the iron grip of the law," " a smiling field," the " eye of the wind," &c. Directly we began to speculate about God we were lost, he said—and the statement moved the *habitués* of the Hall of Science to much mirth. Who could realize the omniscience or the omnipresence of God ? And yet theology was meant for all—for those who turned the soil equally with him who filled the Professor's chair. Speaking of the anthropomorphism of the Bible as instanced in the passage, " Let us make man in our image," he

said, if we could find a perfect man, and abstract all corporal limitations, then we should have in his moral and spiritual functions as good an image of God as the child is of its father. Though God was not as man, the differentia lay rather in the intensity than in the nature of his qualities, as, for instance, his love, his wisdom, &c. On the subject of the fatherhood of God, he said it had sometimes been asked, "If God was the Father of the human race, who was its mother?"—and at this point an unorthodox baby in the audience began to howl dismally. But this, the lecturer said, was a mistake, as He was only spoken of thus in a spiritual sense as being the source of life.

I am obliged, of course, largely to condense the hour's lecture, if I am to chronicle the subsequent discussion, which was also to range over an hour, and to consist of six speeches of ten minutes each, three by opponents, and three answers by the lecturer. At the close, he said that human metaphor was the nearest approach to the heart, and that when we got to comprehend this, we should not only understand the Bible, but realize the possibilities of human nature. Some of us, he added, believed that the Deity had taken the manhood into God; and the Old Testament pointed equally against Rationalism and Atheism. We were not far from Him, in whom we lived and moved and had our being; nay, even a heathen poet had written, "we are His offspring."

"Brother men," he concluded, "let us own Him; let us claim Him as our Father."

Considerable applause followed this discourse, which was rather a plain and outspoken than a profound one; and immediately it was over, an unlikely-looking gentleman, whom I hope I am not wronging by calling Mr. Brisck (I took great pains to have his name spelt to me), mounted the platform. He was clearly a German Jew; and, after complimenting the lecturer on his flowery language, and the Society on its wisdom in putting forward such men in place of others wisely withdrawn, he accused the speaker of begging the question by assuming, in that "Hall of Atheists," that there was a God, and speaking of a revelation to Moses. "I long for a revelation," he said, "but I think I shall wait some time before I get it." The senses again had been spoken of as the windows of the soul; but "What is the soul?" he asked. "I don't understand it." If the Jews to whom the revelation was made were not educated people, what a bungle it was to pick out such a people. There was some slight disturbance in the room; and the speaker excited mirth by saying parenthetically, "Order, Christians!" He accused the lecturer, or the "shentleman," as he termed him, of taking the interpretations of the Jewish Rabbis when they suited him, and ignoring them when they didn't. There was again a slight symptom of hissing repressed by the chairman, and he said, "Never mind: let these

poor geese alone." Which God did the gentleman mean to refer to, Jehovah, Adonai, or Elohim? Would the gentleman dare to say that "a virgin shall conceive, &c." was a true translation? Luther didn't. This question was overruled as irrelevant, and the irrepressible Hebrew said, "Very well, if it's too hard for the shentleman, I give it in." After commenting in a similar strain for something under his ten minutes, this facetious gentleman subsided, having afforded the greatest gratification to some of the yokels in the billycock hats. He was evidently a luminary in the firmament of the Hall of Science. I said he was unlikely-looking; but he handled his subject well from his point of view, and drove the lecturer hard upon his Hebrew.

The lecturer then touched upon what he termed the only important question raised by the last speaker, and that was whether revelation must come to each one *per se*, or whether it might reach him at second hand. He applied it to science, saying we believed because we were told that the world went round the sun, though we had never read Newton's "Principia;" an illustration which was vociferously received in the centre of the hall, where evidently the Christians "most did congregate." By the way, the numbers had increased greatly when the lecture was over and the discussion began. We could not, he said, expect God to write a Bible for each of us; but we may expect Him to open our hearts to understand the one

He has given us. There was only one sun^{for the Jews} (A Voice: "There are millions!")—but we had each our eyes to see with. So there was one Bible; but a conscience for each of us wherewith to unlock it.

Mr. Haslam, a studious-looking artisan, in spectacles and corduroys, then had his brief innings. He spoke fluently and well, contending that all ideas of God were anthropomorphic. Jove was only a gigantic old man in a grey beard; so was Jehovah. Moses went up Sinai to see God. Go up Olympus and you came to Elysium. He read a portion of Job, amid peals of laughter, and also the naming of animals by Adam. God "went down" to see the Tower of Babel. These were only anthropomorphic ideas of the Jews, as was also the injunction about scavengering the camp of Israel because He "walked in the camp." We took science on trust. Yes; but science allowed us to investigate. We could study astronomy, Euclid, geology. We could ask questions and receive answers. But if I were at Oxford, and expressed doubt to my "Proctor," he would cry out "Damnation!" They were fighting at the Hall of Science against damnation. The Deity in England was the Bible, in Turkey the Koran, in India the Vedas, in Persia the Zendavesta. God, and Theos, and Deus meant only good; but as to the idea of a Father sitting up above looking after humanity, it was simply not true. "No God looks down on you," he concluded in an eloquent per-

ration, amid much applause. "Suffer for yourselves."

The lecturer answering an incidental question, "What has the Bible done?" said he would tell them what it had done for him. When he was at Oxford, he did not believe in God. "I was fighting, then," he said, in a few telling sentences, "the same battle that you are fighting; and I have the scars on me yet. I kneel down, and the question will arise, 'Am I only praying to the empty air?' It is so solemn to feel in doubt, so delightful to think that when we cry God hears us!" This idea tickled the yokels immensely; and they were fairly convulsed and forgot their manners when he told a slightly irrelevant story of a sea-captain who always carried a little thumbled Bible with him. On the whole, however, considering the tremendous hiatus between them, the two sides got on remarkably well—much better, I could not help thinking, than a party of red-hot Ritualists and stanch Evangelicals would under similar circumstances. "See how these Christians love one another" has gone out of date, I fear.

Mr. Murray, a stout, comfortable-looking personage, was the third and last speaker on the negative side, as it may be termed. Adopting the *suaviter in modo* as to the lecturer, he said that unfortunately believers were not agreed as to the meaning of the figurative expressions in Scripture. The Sweden-

borgians altogether put aside this gentleman's views; and the question was, who was right? The lecturer, he said, took the words of the Bible literally when it suited him to do so; when it did not, he said they were figurative. The question was, did the Bible make God known? He had read Scripture with the earnest desire to arrive at truth, and wished young men would read it more. He could not conceive Spirit, and quoted a Swedenborgian pamphlet, entitled "The Absurdity of Immaterialism." They told him God was just; but when he read the Old Testament, he found acts attributed to God of which no moral man would be guilty. It was said the Hebrew translation was wrong; but if that was the case, if it was untranslatable into English, it was quite clear God never meant the English to have it. He had not, he said, had the advantage of an University education like the lecturer; but he did not come to that Hall for mere folly. He was at a loss to know why he felt such a strong instinct to preserve his body, yet none to save his soul. He admired, he added, the beautiful passages about the Deity which the lecturer had read; but he could match them with some which were quite the reverse. He concluded by telling a story of a man who dipped a rat in turpentine, and then set it on fire. That was just the kind of act of which the Deity would be guilty, if He burnt him because he could not understand Him.

Thus, after another brief reply from the lecturer, ended the Battle of the Creeds, leaving each party, I imagine, much as they were. A series of guerilla skirmishes was carried on down the room, especially between a feebly aggressive old Christian who looked like a shoemaker, and a supercilious gentleman in a grey coat and tall hat. These two had been fighting off and on all the evening, and I feel sure adjourned to have it out somewhere afterwards.

This sort of thing shows life, no doubt; life of a peculiar, possibly a sort of galvanic kind. That idea occurred to me at the Moorgate Street Station as I returned. There was a girl with some infernal machine or other in the electrical way which bore inscribed the legend, "Electricity is life," giving people shocks at a penny apiece. One martyr bore it up to 400—whatever that may mean—and then howled for mercy. Such, I fancy, must have been my clerical brethren's verdict on the kind of "life" with which they came into contact at the Hall of Science; "possibly invigorating, but certainly shocking."

EXTRAORDINARY SERVICES.

IN many London churches there is a volume kept called "The Book of Strange Preachers." It is simply a record of the clergymen other than those attached to the particular church who minister therein; but the title is dubious, and would provoke a *Saturday Reviewer* into saying that there were a good many strange preachers abroad, or something equally severe. On the same principle, and perhaps with an equally uncertain heading, I make it my business to chronicle some of the extraordinary services—that is, services other than the plain Matins or Evensong of the Church of England as by law established—at which I have lately been present. I must plead guilty to a large amount of sympathy with these eccentric acts of worship. It must have long since been evident that I am, generally speaking, a person of an ill-regulated and erratic turn of mind. "Be the graceless lineaments confessed." I am one of those who think it possible that the continued iteration of "dearly beloved brethren" may possibly have somewhat worn out the force of that time-honoured exhortation. I should like to see a little less rigidity and more

flexibility in what the young ladies tell me I ought to call the "Anglican" and not the "Protestant" ritual. I like a good, fervid, full flavoured, extempore prayer before the sermon, to wit, in place of those extremely correct but slightly fossilized collects. I don't see why, if we always have the same prayers, we should not stick to the Homilies or to Tate and Brady, as that good old Conservative, Cyril Page, of Westminster, lately passed to his rest, did. Nay, let it be spoken very softly, I think it possible to have too much even of such good things as curates, or even beneficed clergy, and I should like to hear an "occasional" preacher in the shape of a good heterodox layman or blatant Non-conformist from time to time ventilate his theories in Coward's Castle. So that it will be evident to all whom it may concern that I am a person of an exceedingly ill-regulated mind, and far beyond the pale of those orthodox divines with whom anonymous censors every now and then rebuke me in several pages of cream laid note, and anything but cream laid terms, for presuming to mingle in any way whatever, still less to criticise, in my eclectic pages, their favourite "ministers.", I think I shall devote one article, as the genial old *Spectator* used to do when he was hard up for a subject, to printing the contributions I receive from harmless critics in this way, heading it, "Orthodox Abuse; or the Billingsgate of True Believers."

Last Passiontide and Easter worked a decided development among London churches in the way of what we may term irregular ritual. Lent had gone on pretty much as usual; there was a trifle more of systematic preaching perhaps; though nothing very original cropped up, as my "Lenten Experiences" went to prove. But on Maundy Thursday some of the more advanced churches went in for "Tenebræ," a striking service consisting of the gradual extinction of a number of tapers signifying the going out of the Light of the World at the Crucifixion. When the last light is extinguished, a noise is made in the church to represent a miniature earthquake. Probably the force of *bathos* could no further go than this. Imagine one of our revered ancestors of the soporific school of theology suddenly being resuscitated and asked to attend "Tenebræ!" On Good Friday the striking ceremony of preaching the Three Hours' Agony was adopted—of course from "our Roman brethren"—in many churches that have not hitherto enjoyed the reputation of being "High." Next year, no doubt, we shall have the Pedilavium or Feet-washing, and the Mass of the Presanctified. There is room for improvement even yet.

In looking over the list of the Passiontide services, I saw that at St. Patrick's, Earl's Court, Kensington, Compline was sung every week night at eight o'clock. That was a decided advance, for Compline is one of

the Hour services, and I had never heard it except in a private oratory, or when sung by certain juvenile members of the Guild of St. Alban's ages ago, and under other exceptional circumstances, to be hereafter described. The idea of hearing it sung in a real church of an orthodox parish was too good to be resisted ; so I set out for St. Patrick's, and found it in the Cromwell Road, very near the establishment of Mr. Forrest, out among the market-gardens that surround that favoured locality. The officiating "priest" of his Hibernian Saintship is "Father" Walker, the elderly gentleman who used to stand out in the centre of the chancel at St. Alban's in full ritualistic vestments, baton in hand, to conduct the fiddles, fifes, and drums when they did a mass with full orchestra. Externally, St. Patrick's looks rather like a ropewalk of corrugated iron ; but internally it is very correct indeed. Six tall tapers stand three on each side of a handsome black and white crucifix ; and when I went to Compline, there was only one officiating minister within the chancel rails. I do not think he could have been a clergyman ; he was too young for that—younger than the youths of the Guild of St. Alban's I used to listen to when I was flirting with their nascent Puseyism, and thought it exceedingly grand to give my priestly benediction after the brethren had sung service. This young gentleman, who had it all to himself, warbled beautifully. His Gregorians were perfect. The congre-

gation did all the responding for themselves, and the service on the whole was pretty, resembling very correct family prayers. It struck me, as an outsider, that when he did not know what else to do, this young man said "Hallelujah" three times, just as, to my utter ignorance, the priest seems to do in the Roman mass. When proceedings appear to flag, he says, "Dominus vobiscum," and the people reply, "Et cum Spiritu tuo," and each party goes on as though they had made the most original remark in the world. I was rather late at St. Patrick's, and sat modestly down in the very back seat, for I felt at a loss, though in a church of my own communion. An ecclesiastical lady, who must have had eyes in the back of her head, immediately left her seat full in front, and relieved me from my heathen darkness by giving me a penny book of Compline. The service is very short, scarcely more than a quarter of an hour, consisting of a few appropriate psalms and prayers, and any number of triple hallelujahs, the hymn "Te, lucis ante terminum," and the Evening Hymn. It was decidedly impressive, without extravagance of any kind, and certainly much more edifying than the rigid evening prayer, which would have taken three times as long. There was a fair congregation, perhaps about fifty, equally divided among the two sexes, and all bore their part bravely in the responses. I shall hope to say my evening

prayer with that young man at St. Patrick's again, whether he be in "orders" or not.

St. James's, Piccadilly—surely the very centre and core of orthodoxy, and the traditional stepping-stone to a bishopric—afforded an illustration Sunday after Sunday of this certainly commendable desire to adapt the Church of England to the wants of the age. A distinguished corps of preachers, whose coryphæus was none other than the Bishop of London himself, had undertaken to enlighten the afternoon congregations at this church on the subject of "The World"—a theme, satire will be sure to say, which an Episcopal preacher might "improve" to advantage from his experience. One Sunday Professor Lightfoot took the difficult and delicate subject of "The Drama," while, hard by, under the very shadow of St. James's, at the little slummy chapel in York Street, Mr. Stopford Brooke was regaling his auditory with a lecture on Byron's "Cain," illustrated with readings. Though the actual services were not "extraordinary," in the technical sense of the term, yet the selection of subjects was so remarkable as to form what the religious papers call "a sign of the times." Each is far too noteworthy to be mentioned only in passing, and would demand separate notice for itself. Decidedly the most extraordinary development of this epoch through which we are passing is that very original

gentleman, Father Ignatius. I do not wish to give him undue space on my canvas, but when I saw that he was to expatiate at St. George's Hall on "Nineteenth Century Devils," I said, "Let Professor Lightfoot talk about 'The World,' or Mr. Stopford Brooke about 'Cain'—Ignatius and his devils for me." I was fearing devils had gone out of fashion in the nineteenth century.

A large congregation or audience—I never know which to call Ignatius's people—had gathered to listen to his diabolical utterances. Ignatius assessed the numbers at a thousand, and I do not think he exaggerated them. The proscenium was arranged as for Mr. Voysey's services, a placard with the motto "Jesus only" being affixed to the red curtain; and the previous portion of the evening's entertainment was performed as heretofore by the old gentleman in the short surplice. I confess myself to have been grievously disappointed in the matter of the devils, for they were only the stock pulpit devils of the Social Evil, Odium Theologicum, &c. &c. Ignatius repeats himself a good deal, and when you have heard him once or twice you know pretty well what is coming. After the devils there was a prayer meeting, to which about two hundred stayed; a regular good, full flavoured, ranting sort of thing, with "experiences" by the members of the congregation. One gentleman, who gave himself out as a

Nonconformist, could not "refrain his silence" in testifying to the truth of what had been said, and another was thankful to say he had "known the Lord Jesus" since the early age of five. Father Ignatius was evidently "to the manner born" of Wesleyan Methodism, for all the time he kept firing off "yes," "no," and "Alleluia" like precatory pop-guns. It was all very extraordinary, very original, perhaps very unrefined, but possibly very hearty. It would certainly have offended the sense of propriety of many a fashionable congregation in churches high and low hard by St. George's Hall; but that would be no criterion as to the usefulness of the meeting. At all events here, and in half a dozen other places, the waters of Bethesda were being stirred, whether by angel or not; and whether for healing or the reverse time alone can show.

A SECOND ADVENT CONFERENCE AND PROPHETICAL MEETING.

For those situated at either pole of the ecclesiastical hemisphere, May is eminently a religious month. With the "Catholic" it is the *Mois de Marie*, the month he consecrates to his ideal womanhood. With the Evangelical Protestant it is the *Mois de Meetings*, devoted to Exeter Hall and much speaking. It is a time when passers along the Strand see unctuous gentlemen intensely in earnest go in and out at those portals of Orthodoxy. Country parsons of Evangelical "persuasion" time their visit to Babylon then, when it is leavened with the little leaven of Gospel ministry, sadly inadequate to leaven its whole lump, seething as it is with the opposite elements of Rationalism and Romanism, and all the other minor isms that ecclesiastical flesh is heir to. Then the Church and Conventicle meet together, the Platform and the Pulpit kiss each other. The *Record* is in large demand, and the *Rock* runs into special editions. The hearts of Evangelical London in general, and of Evangelical spinsters in particular, are in a flutter of excitement. And in that, which might seem to be specially termed the year "of grace," 1873, the

excitement was special too. There was a *crème de la crème* of orthodoxy present in the metropolis, a sublimer height than the Hall of Exeter; it was St. George's Hall, Langham Place, where was found the very centre and focus of Evangelical truth. Synchronizing by no mere coincidence, but by studied arrangement with the period of the May meetings, a series of conferences was organized for considering those tremendous clauses of the Evangelical creed, the nearness of the Second Advent, and the fulfilment of Prophecy in current history. I write these words in no spirit of levity. They are tremendous clauses, and this school of religious thought holds them with a fearful tenacity. No one could be present, as I was at the opening conference on Monday, May 5th, without feeling that these doctrines had become ingrained in the very being of the speakers, as one spoke of his forty, another of his three and twenty years' study of them. With their earnest grip of doctrines, though we cannot accept them, we still, from our standpoint, must sympathize if we are consistent. It is only where, from individual conviction, they pass into indiscriminate denunciation of all who differ from them that we feel equally bound to part company with them. To this opening conference I went, then; and I have a particular reason for stating under what circumstances I went. In obedience to publicly advertised announcements I communicated to the secretary my wish to be present, adding—and

it is to this fact I draw particular attention—that my object in coming was to write an account of the proceedings for a London newspaper. From that gentleman—a clergyman of the Church of England—I received a courteous reply, informing me which would be the best evenings to suit my purpose, and enclosing a dozen tickets of admission—these tickets, be it also observed, being publicly offered for sale. This I took as a permission to write on the subject of the Conference, and engaged to do so. When I entered the hall I found a goodly assemblage already gathered, the act-drop being raised, and a pious parlour-scene set, with table, green cloth, conventional water-bottle, and Glastonbury chair for the president. I had always looked upon Glastonbury chairs as rather “High.” As I went in, I was asked by a polite attendant, if I would take a seat on the platform. I declined, and I think a glance at my M.B. waistcoat, showed him he had made a *faux pas*. But still, though he wore a splendid blue rosette, he showed me to a front place, and gave me a copy of the hymns that were going to be sung. I wonder whether he would have done so if I had been honestly labelled Broad Churchman. An elderly gentleman with a firmly-set mouth, and no voice to speak of, took the chair, and gave out a hymn which a stentorian clergyman on his right immediately vociferated, and all the audience or congregation (I never know which to call them) took up full-mouthed.

As I looked up on the platform or back upon the assemblage I could not help contrasting the gathering with what I had seen at the shrine of Mr. Voysey or Professor Clifford. There is—satire apart—noticeable in such a meeting—

“ A certain curling of the nether lip,
A certain raising of the nose’s tip,”

which are quite *sui generis*. A gentleman, whose name I did not learn, offered up prayer and asked for a blessing on the “getherying” and the “brothren” who were to speak. Then the chairman read a few verses from Matt. xxv., about “Foolish Virgins,” which I thought might possibly have seemed personal to some present, only nobody could hear him. He then made a remarkable request to the effect that, if any newspaper reporters were present, they would refrain from noticing the proceedings. I immediately entered a silent protest against such a request, by taking my notes *coram publico* more than ever, not only because I felt myself bound so to do, but because I saw two shorthand reporters commissioned by the Conference, and located in a private box, reporting the whole proceedings verbatim. I did not see why they should enjoy a monopoly in a public meeting, so I continued to report proceedings, though I saw the eyes of the whole assembly fastened upon me as I did so.

Mr. Dibdin, a divine in a most orthodox dress-coat, then came to the front, and said that though there be minor differences amongst Evangelicals, there

were really no differences at all. This was not the case, for instance, between himself and a High Churchman. "I think him an idolater, and he thinks me an infidel," said Mr. Dibdin. So, too, with the Broad Churchman. He thinks the Bible a myth. Professor Jowett says, in "Essays and Reviews," that Christ made mistakes in quoting His own Scriptures. If the Broad Churchman was right, he must be wrong. His subject was that of a Personal Antichrist. Here there was room for great divergence of opinion. Was He a man, or was He the Papacy? Now no one, he charitably observed, in the world had a greater hatred of the Papacy than himself. He believed Cecil was right when he called Popery the masterpiece of Satan. It was not even a corrupt Christianity, but "a vile and devil-invented substitute for Christianity." He did not wish to be misunderstood (and I really don't think there was much danger; for he was plain-spoken to a fault). He denied the claim of the Pope to be a Christian at all; but yet he held that the Pope was not the Man of Sin. The most striking passage on this subject was 2 Thess. ii. 3. Here it was not a system or succession of men spoken of, but *one man*. St. Peter's at Rome was not the "Temple of God," but a temple of devil-worship. There had been fanatics in that Synagogue of Satan, that Devil's Church, who held the Pope to be God; but his own claim was that he was the "Servant of the Servants of God." On a

certain day in the year (left conveniently vague by the speaker) he washed the feet of a lot of beggars ; but still Mr. Dibdin did not hold that even the assumption of infallibility amounted to saying that he himself was God. "It seems to me"—such was ever the final appeal of this speaker—"that this must apply to some man possessed by the devil, who will say, 'Christ is not God, I am God.'" He believed that soon—we know not how soon—such an one would set up himself as God, and find worshippers. He would not rely on false miracles, but would work real wonders, like Jannes and Jambres. He believed, moreover, that if such a man started as God tomorrow, he would find even Evangelicals to follow him. "I do not think," he concluded, "that the Pope is the Man of Sin, because he, at least, professes to be Christian ; but," he concluded in an eloquent peroration, "whatever we may think of the Man of Sin, we are all agreed as to the Man of Sorrows, we look forward to His Personal Reign, and pray in His own words, 'Thy kingdom come.'"

After a brief prayer by a gentleman in blue spectacles, rejoicing in the ineuphonious name of Skrine, Dr. Nolan took up as his proverb, "The Second Advent, the central point of every promise, and the basis of every duty," and very eloquently did he treat his great subject. He protested mildly and sensibly against the veto laid on reporters, possibly because he saw I was pursuing the even tenor of my

way, and then went on to show how all mysteries culminated in the Second Advent; the mystery of God manifest in the flesh; and also the antagonistic mystery of sin. He differed from his "dear brother" Dibdin in thinking that mystery had an inchoate fulfilment in the Papacy. The sun never photographed an object more plainly than the doctrine of infallibility and the syllabus described the state of things spoken of in 2 Thess. ii. Yet prophecy might be "headed up," as described by his "dear brother." Then there was the mystery of the Jew—mystery meaning a truth partially revealed—and it being (as Robert Hall said) the glory of God to conceal things. If we knew nothing of God, there could be no association with Him. If we knew all, we should say He was only like ourselves. A limited horizon was best. Then there were the mysteries of the Gentile, and of the Church, and finally the mystery of the Resurrection. It had been objected that there was nothing practical in these views, but every grace was quickened by a reception of the doctrine. Among the "thickening signs of the times" there was no reason why Christ should not come to-day. Might it be ours when He said, "Lo, I come quickly," to reply, "Even so; come, Lord Jesus."

Another hymn was then sung, one of those strange doctrinal effusions which sound like a theological treatise in long metre. It was taken to the tune usually assigned to Keeble's exquisite "Son of my

Sun

soul, thou Saviour dear," and one could not help noticing the difference between the two compositions. The assembly sang it with one voice, like the old Puritans on the hillsides, and in a slow measured cadence that was very impressive. Then followed a little amicable passage-at-arms as to who had got up the Conference. One gentleman said that Mr. Skrine had taken all the liability on himself, and then Mr. Skrine put in a modest disclaimer and said it was all Mr. Baxter, and Dr. Nolan said Mr. Baxter was just the man to do such a good deed on the sly. The ladies sniggled at this, and the gentlemen applauded; and then Mr. Haslam, the gentleman who had led the singing with the mouth of a Stentor, girded up his loins and began to speak. Some people did not believe in second conversions, he said, but he believed in third as well as second. We were converted once when we believed in the Christ of grace; again when we believed in Christ Himself; and yet again when we believed in Christ as our basis of hope. That was his subject — "Hope in the Second Advent." He had once been spending a happy day in the country (it put one in mind of the Rosherville advertisements) with a "dear brother;" and they had talked much about Jesus. The time came for them to part, and just as the train was coming up, his dear brother somewhat eccentrically asked him if he believed Christ was coming. He said, "Yes;" and his dear brother asked "What for?" "What for?

Why, to judge the quick and dead," he replied. "Oh no!" said the dear brother, and then got into the train and went off, leaving him in a state of wonder as to what he meant to say. Soon after he received by post from his dear brother a book which made him understand his Bible for the first time. He had been brought up in that "old Popish tale," that Christ was coming as Judge, but he had not yet looked on the Advent as the source of hope. He did not like to hear people talk of views or opinions about this. He could only think of it under the aspect of hope. Philanthropists who tried to better the world forgot the curse, forgot the blight there was upon all creation. Here the gentleman waxed so intensely earnest, that he made even that well-seasoned auditory smile, but he pursued the uneven tenor of his way to far greater length than I can follow him. He had immense *copia verborum*, but singularly little to say. In fact, that was one great characteristic of the whole proceedings. Two or three more or less trite maxims summed up the whole doctrines brought forward, and each speaker had to fall back on quoting the last "dear brother" who had spoken. Far from noticing or magnifying the minor differences between the speakers, which had been the chairman's reason for tabooing reporters, and which I suppose made him look so cross at me all the evening because I purposely took my notes by way of protest, I was struck by the

remarkable consensus, a circumstance which sometimes threatened to reduce the meeting to a sort of Mutual Admiration Society. A slight skirmish, or a few words on the other side, would have been positively refreshing; but the utmost limits of divergence among the "dear brethren" were whether the Pope was the Man of Sin, or whether there was something coming worse than a Pope—probably some ideal Broad Churchman, possibly a gigantic Dean Stanley or Professor Jowett. As Mr. Haslam continued long speaking, I confess I felt inclined to the Eutychian heresy (as somebody has termed it), but his more than Pauline vehemence kept me awake. There were no signs of Christ's coming, except those which were analogous to the signs of sunrise in the world of nature. When the sun was just about to appear above the horizon, we saw the light, we heard the song of birds. So was it now. Never was there so "full" a Gospel as at present; never did the "birds of God"—whoever they may be—sing as they sang now. This very energetic gentleman went all over his subject again two or three times, and then, discovering that time was up, subsided, and brought the lengthened proceedings to a close. Three gatherings were announced for the morrow, and Prayer and Benediction dismissed the assembly. It was only when I passed out that I could fairly assess its dimensions, and I perceived it had been, truly as the speakers described it, a noble meeting.

One might not sympathize with all the views expressed. One might not think those fifteen or sixteen rather amiable than intellectual-looking gentlemen on the platform represented a power likely to move the world; but both they and the auditory, hugging their well-thumbed Bibles, were so evidently in earnest, that one forgot all else in that supreme fact. In one point the Evangelicals have succeeded to a miracle. They have practically disestablished the Church. I had no idea who were "clergymen," and who merely "ministers." They all had the gift of a common speech. What matter though it sound foreign to us? What matter who it be—High Churchman, Low Churchman, or Broad Churchman—who shall revive the now obsolete comment, "See how these Christians love one another?" We do not even call one another "dear brother," still less those outside our pale. Fancy the Archbishop of Canterbury talking of his "dear brother" Manning, or Dean Stanley openly parading his affectionate fraternity with Mr. James Martineau. It may be all coming; and possibly the first to give the impetus, and even to make it extend more millennially than they wish, shall be some such conclave as gathered for their Prophetical Conference in the pious parlour-scene on the stage of St. George's Theatre.

EARLY MASS.

It would be a curious subject of speculation to guess the different causes which operate to bring people out upon the flags of "stony-hearted London" at six o'clock on a November morning. One class, indeed, there is—the Bedouin of that desert—whom, despite our Social Congresses, we always find there, and probably always shall find there. The morning sees him, or, worse still, sees *her*, where the night left each of them, on doorstep, under railway arch, or in some one of the many lairs where lurks the human animal whose misfortune it is to find itself "houseless by night." There is yet another species of the genus *homo* always represented, too, in that inclement locality, no matter whether we make our observation in November or August, and this species will always be so represented whilst Babylon the Great is what she is—the roysterer or debauchee sneaking home, red-eyed and hot-breathed. Then there are those whose occupations draw them from bed at untimely hours; the "professional" early risers, such as the greengrocer, butcher, and fishmonger, going to or returning from the markets, rattling nimbly over the greasy, fog-damped stones

in light spring-carts. There is the milkman, not now waking the echoes with his peripatetic caterwaul, but driving with dignity in a cart laden with cans which have just come in by an early train; himself clad in a property smock-frock and hat labelled with some such intensely rustic title as "The Vale of Taunton Dairy Company (Limited)." There is, again, the British workman *par excellence*, no longer trudging off with his basket of tools to walk to his "work," but—such is the levelling effect of our iron roads—footing it quickly to the nearest station, to catch the "workman's train." There are the early breakfast people, and others whose occupations are called into existence by these involuntary early risers; and then come those eccentric folks, the voluntary early risers, who are up and out on the flags, not because they are obliged, but of their own free will. There is the mercilessly muscular Christian who takes his dip in the Serpentine, or his before-breakfast plunge at the bath, all the year round, and who goes along flaunting his towel as if to apprise everybody of the fact. There is the "young man from the country," who, for the life of him, cannot get out of his bucolic habit of taking a mouthful of fresh air before breakfast, and who deludes himself that he is getting it amid the fog of a November morning in London. Between these two fixed poles, however, the people who have not been in bed at all, and the people who get up simply because they like it, there is a class,

the special one now "wanted"—the people who get up from duty rather than from inclination—though still not from necessity; the large and certainly growing population who attend early service, or "first mass," at the different London churches. A glance at the "Guide to Divine Service," published by Mr. Masters, will show those who are curious in such matters that more than one hundred churches in London have daily service, many of these at the small hours of the morning; whilst in more than a dozen the Holy Communion is celebrated each morning. Many, if not most, of the latter, are advanced Ritualistic Churches, and the Holy Communion is so generally termed "Mass" by those who attend them, that it has seemed to justify the heading of this article. Time was, of course, when that expression, "early mass," would have applied only to a small section of our fellow-citizens, those to whom the term "Catholic" would have been assigned as signifying members of the Romish Communion; but, as all Anglicans now claim the title of Catholic, so they are beginning, at all events, to borrow the term "mass" for their Communion Service. The "Anglo" Catholics now go to "mass" as religiously as, and in much larger numbers than, their "Romish brethren" went twenty years ago. If any person would check this assertion, he has only to attend "early mass" at one of the more advanced churches of London, such as All Saints', Margaret Street, or St. Alban's, Holborn.

I chose the former of these two churches as my *locale*, and the Festival of All Saints (November 1st) as the time for my observations. Setting out on the raw wintry morning, amid such sights and scenes as I have described, I found a few distressingly punctual people like myself awaiting the opening of the iron gates that lead into the imposing structure. Being at length admitted, we saw that the church was decorated for what is, of course, as much the Festival of the year to the Margaret Street folks, as the *Toussaint* is abroad. The Church of All Saints is never over-decorated: what is done is sure to be in good taste. A wreath of white camellias was fixed upon the altar-cross, and upon the altar itself were six vases filled with flowers. The candelabra on each side of the altar were also adorned with the richest floral decorations. A wreath of flowers ran along the low marble screen which separates the chancel from the body of the church; and this was all, save that the banners were ranged against the chancel walls, ready for the high celebration at eleven o'clock.

Soon after we had taken our places, a *religieuse* entered the chancel and removed the covering from the altar, making profound obeisance every time she had occasion to pass it. A fair congregation had assembled; and, exactly as the clock struck seven, a tall, red-bearded "priest," clad in white silk vestments, entered with two chorister boys. He com-

menced, in a low monotone, the ordinary Communion Service of the Church of England, from which there was no deviation whatever—no hymns or music of any kind. The only points noticeable in the demeanour of the congregation, beyond extreme reverence, were the kneeling at the clause in the Nicene Creed which refers to the Incarnation, the crossing of themselves at that portion which asserts belief in the “life of the world to come,” and prostration during the act of consecrating the elements. One matronly lady in the front seat was absolutely prone on the ground at this, which is, of course, the climax of the solemnity. The position of the celebrant was in front of the altar, with his back to the people, and the elevation of the elements was as undisguised as though no Mackonochie case had ever been decided. Just after the Prayer for the Church Militant, a second priest entered from the vestry, took his place in the stalls, and assisted in the administration, leaving immediately at its conclusion, and before the Post-Communion. There may be some occult meaning in this; but to the uninstructed it looks slightly irreverent to see the priest defer presenting himself until the last moment, and at the first opportunity take off his stole and leave the church. I am “ill at numbers,” as Shakspeare says; but there must have been, I should think, some two hundred people at this early Communion or “early mass,” and—I still speak vaguely—about in

the proportion of one man to five or six women. There were forty-one Sisters of Mercy, and a great many of the girls from their schools, and so forth. Nearly all this congregation communicated ; and, to judge from some of the girls with the Sisters, there must be considerable laxity as to the age for confirmation, for some were mere children. The men communicated first, then the women, then the *religieuses*, and lastly the children. As the forty-one Sisters filed up the centre aisle towards the altar, kneeling whenever there was a pause, the grouping of the sombre habits, in the dimly-lighted church and amidst the stillness of early morning, was most effective. There was a blind man led to the altar, and another sorely paralysed, who had to be supported ; as had also one of the Sisters, whose thin white face peered out from her black veil as she was led back tottering to her seat. There seemed few poor, except domestic servants ; but then it must be remembered that the All Saints' congregation is a special and mostly a wealthy one, so that the absence of the poor by no means proves that the sacramental system, as it is there carried out, does not tell upon the lower classes. I myself have never seen many poor even at St. Alban's ; but the fact has probably resulted from deficient opportunities of observation.

The ceremony lasted until nearly eight o'clock, and then the bell began to ring out for the second

celebration, which would still be followed by a third at eleven. At the same time the bell of St. Andrew's, Wells Street, was tolling for early celebration there. What would our grandfathers and grandmothers, in good old soporific times, have said to all this? Truly there is vitality, at all events, in this movement. People do not face November fogs at dawn without meaning something by it. We form a very superficial idea of the genius of Ritualism if we judge it only by seeing young ladies and gentlemen go to choral service at easy hours with pretty gilt crosses on their Prayer Books. There were few young gentlemen or young ladies at this early mass, and I saw no pretty gilt crosses at all. The congregation was largely composed of steady middle-aged men and matrons. Whatever else it might be, the service was intensely real. Much as the Ritualist dislikes the word "Protestant," he does protest, and that with justice, against the idea that ceremonial is everything, or even the principal thing, in his worship. Its essence is the doctrine of the Real Presence in the Eucharist. Accept that, and an ornate ritual follows as a thing of course. Here, however, there was no ornate ritual or sensuous adjunct of any kind; but one could not help feeling that there were life and earnestness; while the simplicity of the Anglican Communion Service contrasts well with the cumbrous complications of the Roman Mass. It is a pity to

transfer the name. It does well enough for Father Ignatius, in a religious novel, to call the Communion Service the "Mass according to Dr. Cranmer;" but even in its highest form of development the Communion Service differs *toto cælo* from the Roman Mass. There was possibly much in this service with which an ordinary plain-sailing "Church of England man" would fail to sympathize; but there was no excitement, nothing he would dare to call "mummery," only profound reverence for what the worshippers consider the central mystery of religion. Those who would honestly study the real essence of Ritualism will do well to avoid "high masses" with full bands and processions, and make their observations as I did on All Saints' Day, quietly and calmly, at a morning celebration or "early mass."

THE "TWELVE DAYS' MISSION."

A BROAD-CHURCH clergyman, at that time in easy harness, I was honestly anxious to discover whether the sudden "special attack on sin and Satan" on the part of the Church of England, organized some years ago, was simply spasmodic or a sign of real vitality. I had no preconceived ideas on the subject, though I may say frankly I did not like the idea of the Confessional grafted on the originally colourless scheme so innocently sanctioned by the Bishop of London. Still, if a good end be gained, it is the extreme of folly to quarrel about the means. The question to be settled was whether this "*Guerre de Douze Jours*" will do Satan any harm. If it did not do him harm it would do him good in its recoil. I propose to chronicle diary-wise my experiences of as many of these mission-services as a somewhat busy life enabled me to attend.

MONDAY EVENING.

I went to the eight o'clock service at St. Mary Magdalene's, Paddington, taking with me (imprudently, as it appeared,) a lady. Determined to be in time we got to the church nearly half an hour before

service. We sat down, after the heathen custom prevalent in Ritualistic churches, exactly as desired—myself on one side, my companion on the other, somewhat in front, that is, near the pulpit. I was much struck with the number of poor persons, not only women but men, who came in. Perhaps they looked a little too much polished up for the occasion, like the shiny apples so disagreeably suggestive of pocket-handkerchiefs at an old woman's stall. Their evident acquaintance with the pious middle-aged ladies in poke bonnets seemed also significant. However, there they were, where under ordinary circumstances they would not be—in church. That was something at all events. After waiting about a quarter of an hour, a tall individual in a cassock, who did not seem at all at home in that inconvenient garment, stalked down the aisle and picked out all the well-dressed ladies, requesting them to retire to the back of the church, so as to allow the poor and ill-clad to be within easy range of the pulpit. My companion being thus obliged to retire, I retired too, to a corresponding position on the men's side, sitting humbly in a delicious draught at the west end, since it seemed that I had no need to be preached at, and the poor people had. I was mistaken, however. Before I had been seated five minutes, another individual requested me to remove to the position I had just left. I suppose he thought I did require to be preached at. I demurred, as I

did not like to leave a lady at the extreme opposite end of a crowded church. A third active, if not intelligent officer, however, insisted upon my proximity to the pulpit. So, as my position seemed to cause the good people so much trouble, and we were evidently not expected there, we left without waiting for service, after having sat about half an hour. Thus my first effort at witnessing a mission-service was infructuous, and Satan scored one, I suppose. This, of course, was a mere hitch in the working of machinery new to the Church of England, which the tact and courtesy of the incumbent of St. Mary Magdalene's would soon remedy by drilling the gentlemen in the cassocks. In point of fact nothing can be more un-Catholic or offensive to the poor than thus picking out the well-dressed; as much as to say, "You do not want saving from sin or Satan, only those poor folks." The very essence of Catholic worship, or of a mission-service, surely is that rich and poor shall meet without distinction. The Roman Catholics realize this. The Anglo-Catholics will learn it when they get a little more *au fait* at their new work.

A second remark which it occurs to me to make is that the "bowing to the altar" is not yet satisfactory at this church. If it be done at all, it should be properly done. At present it looks as though the genuflectors were ashamed of themselves. It put me exactly in mind of the awkwardness of my

countrymen in lifting their hats to the lady at the *comptoir* in a French restaurant. Contrast this awkwardness with the inimitable grace of the thorough-bred Parisian diner, and you know the difference between the genuflexion at St. Mary Magdalene's and St. Mary of the Angels. The fact is I know from a poor parishioner, who appealed in the most honest ignorance for the *rationale* of the proceeding, the poor people fancy they are bowing to the magnificent brazen eagle which serves as a lectern. This I know is literally and simply true. The question was put to a member of my household by a poor woman, "Why do they bow to the brass eagle?" In point of fact, until the reservation of the sacrament is allowed, there is nothing else to bow to. The genuflexion of the Romanist means something—that of the Anglo-Catholic can mean nothing as yet, for devoutly as he may believe in the Real Presence in the consecrated elements, there are simply no consecrated elements there, and I venture to presume the most advanced Ritualist does not hold a special presence in the chancel more than in the body of the church. These, however, as we have said, are merest details, about which it would be unwise and wicked to quarrel, if the great end is attained of diminishing sin, and so diminishing sorrow and suffering.

WEDNESDAY.

Attended the five o'clock service at All Saints', Margaret Street. There seemed no doubt that this mission was doing good in the way of calling out the preaching power of the Church of England. The old objection (true enough in its degree) of clinging to the MS. sermon will probably not attach to us much longer. All praise to those who help to make us natural. The method will probably be by running violently into the opposite extreme for a little while. A sharp bend in a contrary direction will straighten the crooked stick. I got to All Saints' ("sicut meus est mos") half an hour before service, and found myself in the thick of a sermon. It was a sermon, and no mistake. A young man, whose name I could not ascertain (but whom I afterwards found to be Mr. Body), was habited simply in a cassock, and occupied a chair in the middle of the chancel—that is, there was a chair there for him, but he ran about, fell on his knees, &c.—in fact, was everywhere but in the chair, and poured forth a torrent of fervid words with the voice of a Stentor. He was thoroughly in earnest, thoroughly practical, and certainly very striking. There was nothing to offend the most sensitive; yet still there was no doubt that his sermon came under the popular denomination of "rant." Widely different was the discourse of the Rev. R. M. Benson, "Superior of the Society of St. John the

Evangelist," which followed the beautiful five o'clock service. Scholarly and monastic in style, it formed a thorough contrast to our energetic friend of half an hour previous. The preacher was remarkably fluent. His subject, "The Love of God," was admirably set forth, and his delivery decidedly imposing; quiet yet earnest, and at times warming into eloquence. But, O Rev. Father "Superior," is it true to say that love was unknown to earth from the fall of Man until the time when, as you so eloquently said, apostrophizing the matchless group over the altar, "yon blessed mother stood by her Son's cross?" Was all else "lawless passion?" Even you were forced to name parental love as a possible exception. Altogether the impression left on me—Broad Church as some of my friends term me—was eminently favourable. All Saints' was, it appears, the centre from which this mission radiated. I could not help thinking as I listened to the hymn "O Paradise," so exquisitely rendered, and afterwards to the refined discourse of the reverend "superior," why cannot we "agree to differ?" Why is it that some good people of the Evangelical sort sniff Popery in the most innocent ceremonial? Why, again, would these scholarly men, who have done so much for our worship and Christian work, utterly and scornfully repudiate the merely æsthetic approval which alone such as I could give to their ceremonies? I wonder whether this mission will teach the High Churchman

toleration for the Broad, and the Low sympathy with the High! What other reunion of Christendom can we ever hope to compass? I had intended going to an eight o'clock mission service, but got lost in the fog; I mean literally the November London fog—nothing to do with the mission.

THURSDAY.

Mission Service, 8 P.M., at All Saints', Margaret Street. I have learnt much from this service. 1st. The energetic preacher I heard the day before yesterday was the Rev. George Body, vaguely described as "of Wolverhampton." He deserves his name. There is considerable body in his discourses. 2nd. That was not a sermon, but the fag-end of a Bible-class at which I was present. The mission service consisted only of a few prayers, read in the pulpit. Its essence was the sermon. The subject chosen by Mr. Body was "Blind Bartimæus." It was ably and eloquently treated, but with all the excessive action, and (there is no other word for it) "mouthing" noticeable on a previous occasion. This sermon, and the study of Isaiah, which succeeded it in the Bible-class, left no room for doubting the preacher's earnestness. He thoroughly believes what he preaches, and is sure that the making others believe it will benefit them. He has, and urges, a noble scorn of all "proprieties," all mere book devotion. But there is the making so much more of the Death that was

died than the Life that was lived in Holy Land, which seems to me, and such as me, to give a tone of unreality to the teaching. If any one could make that form of preaching practical, I believe it would be such men as this. The question remains, Is it practical? Can it be made so?

FRIDAY.

I find there was an article in the *Times* this morning on Mr. Body's preaching. I was glad I had not seen it. The *Echo* reproduced the substance of it in a paragraph headed "The English Hyacinthe." They compared Mr. Body to Wesley and Whitfield, but failed to notice the "confessional" element in his teaching, which certainly narrows its usefulness. He announced that he would "receive confession from men on Saturday evening next from six to eight," in the sacristy of All Saints'.

SATURDAY.

Attended the 5 P.M. service at St. Paul's, Wilton Place, Knightsbridge, where the Rev. W. J. E. Bennett, of Frome, was preaching a course of sermons. It was amusing to notice how the former generation of so-called "Puseyites" represented by such men as Messrs. Liddell and Bennett, was completely distanced by the modern Ritualists. They cannot get out of their old habits of rigidity and formalism, which these young Titans have thrown to the winds. The

sermon was exceedingly dry, and not preached, but read from a MS. In fact, both time and place lifted it out of the category of "Mission" sermons. It was a Belgravian discourse *pur et simple*, and even made distinct reference to the sins of the London "season." The only symptom of the Mission was a collection introduced into the service, and a certain jaunty, not to say rollicking air about the hymn tunes, which is always assumed to be a characteristic of a Revival. "O Paradise" was thus sung to a jumpy measure in six-eight time, about as alien from the spirit of the words as could well be imagined.

Eight P.M.—"*On revient toujours*," &c. To All Saints', Margaret Street, again. I found at least fifty people waiting outside the gate at seven o'clock for a service which was to commence at eight. Mr. Body preached on the Magdalene at the house of Simon, though he was so nearly voiceless as to be obliged to forego his Bible-class. His subject naturally led him to speak much of the "social evil," *par excellence*, and he was just enough to address his sharpest remarks to the men's side of the congregation. He told a somewhat sensational story of a poor creature from the streets who the evening before had been attracted to St. Alban's simply by seeing the large cross at the head of the Mission bill outside, and went in to ascertain its meaning. The "priest" saw her and spoke to her; the result being that she left her course of life, and "that night, instead of sleeping in

a haunt of sin, slept in a house of penitence." He truly said, if no other result than this came of the Mission—supposing this to be permanent—that Mission had not been in vain. After the sermon the men were again invited to stop to confession. "Do stop now. Wont you stop?" But alas! they didn't stop. It was rather too much for our English reserve just yet to expect one or two individuals to come out in the face of that congregation, and undergo the unaccustomed ordeal of confession. I do not think the preacher expected it; for he was so very urgent in his invitation. He said he had no difficulty with the women, but he wanted the stronger sex. I fear it will require a great deal of Mission work before any of the stronger sex, really deserving the name, will be up to confession point.

MONDAY.

Attended the Mission service at St. Alban's, Holborn, where for the first time I found the form of service followed out as it stands in the little penny books with the big crosses outside. It was very doleful. The Penitential Psalms were chanted slowly to the most unmitigated Gregorians, and the prayers monotoned very low down in the gamut. One cannot help wondering whether a little cheerful music written in round notes on five lines would not suit these simple folk as well as the dreadful square-headed notes on four lines. Why must we go back

to imperfect musical notation when we want to sing about religion? The hymns, however, were more lively, and "There is a fountain," followed by its refrain of "I do believe, I will believe," &c., put one in mind of the meeting-house. In fact, the whole affair is a wonderful congeries of the Roman and Ranter elements grafted on the stock of "the Church of England as by law established." By all means let us be eclectic. We cannot afford to neglect any means for "evangelizing the masses," as the phrase goes. The sermon of the Rev. "Father" O'Neil was on the Sacrament of Penance! Think of that and weep, ye orthodox, who teach your little children to answer the question, "How many Sacraments?" "Two only." The "Rev. Father" preached on "the Sacrament of Penance." He was a little stiff and unnatural, labouring under a conscious effort to popularize an unpopular and unpalatable subject. It failed utterly, because it was unnatural; and the congregation, not large at the beginning, dribbled away perceptibly on the women's side. It was surmised that the second week of the Mission would prove more attractive than the first; but one fails to see much sign of it here. There were a dozen or two of outsiders, evidently, like myself, come to see what it was all about, who had to be plied with little mission-books by an attentive priest in a long cassock, who walked about all service and sermon time for the purpose. I kept looking back, around, and about

me, in real curiosity, but I could not see the faintest trace of enthusiasm, or anything suggestive of a revival service. In fact, to my mind the characteristic of the service was listlessness; of the sermon, effort—and effort unsuccessful in attaining its end. In plain words, the whole affair at St. Alban's on Monday night hung fire.

Still, however, the question recurs—Is not the flexibility thus induced upon our previously rigid *cultus* a good symptom? We may not believe in the preaching of penance, in the regimen of confession, or the efficacy of "celebrations" at uncomfortable hours of the morning. To us it may seem that the honest but fervent inculcation of moral and religious duties, with hearty free services—English without a tinge of Romanism—would be means at once more simple and efficacious. But still those means exist as yet only in theory. The "Church of Progress" is but in embryo, and at present scarcely adapted to individual needs. These people, on the contrary, have put their theory into practice. They have begun to work whilst we are talking. Honour to whom honour is due. The work is worth noticing curiously, if only to see whether its tendency be, as its friends think, to diminish sin, or—as its adversaries allege—to play into the hands of the Pope. The question will obtrude itself—If you use thus all the machinery of Rome, why do you not go to head-quarters for it? Why not embrace a system of which all

these are the normal developments, instead of trying to force them on the Church of England, where they are so evidently foreign, and so likely to break up the institution upon which it is sought to graft them? They will never suit the "Establishment." Will not the choice lie ultimately between a Free Church—that is, according to "Catholic" ideas, a schismatical Church—and that One Church from which those who use almost all its dogmas and discipline seem to stand so unnecessarily apart—towards which plain folks like myself seem to see these well-meaning people so unconsciously (if unconsciously) drifting?

So, then, the much-talked-of Twelve Days' Mission was at an end, and became matter of history. As it does so, we cannot but pause for a moment, and, with the experiences fresh upon us, inquire—will it prove to have been only a violent spasm, or a real epoch in Church history? Happy—on the *suave mari magno* principle—those whose lot it is to stand, like myself, on the bank, watching the current of events, without danger of being carried away by it. Seeing at the end of the Mission-book a form of service for the "Renewal of Baptismal Vows," I sallied forth on Wednesday evening, prepared to renew mine; though I had never formally renounced them, and fancied they were renewed once for all at confirmation. I must look up my theology. However, the difficulty did not occur, for the service was

ignored. My last Mission evening was spent—shall I own the soft impeachment?—still at the shrine of Mr. Body at All Saints', Margaret Street. Perhaps no stronger proof of the fascination exercised by mere fluency of speech and earnestness of purpose could be adduced than this man's power to bring me thither evening after evening at the sacrifice of so much valuable time, and amid influences not altogether congenial. If I, who could sit there coldly criticising even his most telling "bits," felt this fascination, what of the sensitive females, and men more impressionable than myself, whom I saw there with the tears they tried to conceal actually bursting through the hands with which they covered their faces! I certainly never saw such a sight outside or inside the walls of a church as I have seen at All Saints'. One hour and a quarter before sermon-time there was a crowd in Margaret Street. At ten minutes past seven, when the outer gates were opened, the rush resembled a Jenny Lind night in olden time at the Opera. The church was filled in a few minutes; for many persons—members of the regular congregations we will presume—were admitted through the clergy-house. Then ensued a time of conversation; not light flippant talk—I witnessed no one single instance of that—but, both before the service and also between the sermon and Bible-class, there was deep, earnest conversation of men on religious topics. The sermon, to my think-

ing, was Mr. Body's *chef d'œuvre*. Its subject was Perseverance; its text the suggestive one, "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our Faith." It was a discourse not to be forgotten; more quietly delivered, and truer to its logical divisions, than any that had preceded it. Its subject was characteristically summarized by the preacher as "Christian Pluck." The Bible-study that succeeded was an eloquent picture of the condition of the Departed in Paradise, and an appeal by that softest of all sanctions to perseverance. When the mother was pointed to the arms of her dead baby-boy beckoning her forward, or the young man urged by the love of a lost mother, one can well understand the sensation (I wrote that word unadvisedly, and not with its new meaning) produced. Looking round analytically, I could not but confess I had seen as much feeling evoked by a powerful drama. I have seen grey-headed men weeping at Mrs. Mellon's impersonation of the mother at the foot of the guillotine where her son is to be executed, in Mr. Watts Phillips' "Dead Heart." Will this prove more lasting? I believe each does good; but one, we know, is ephemeral. I am only echoing the preacher's own anxious and often-expressed doubt. Will this "sensation" prove more permanent?

The experiment of this Mission has been cleverly elaborated and successfully worked out as far as

immediate result goes. I saw strict Roman Catholics and ultra-Evangelicals, in whose nostrils All Saints' has been hitherto unsavoury, gathered in last night's congregation. Will the cohesive power last?

Whatever else be the upshot of all this, it proved we had at least one Boanerges amongst us, the Rev. Mr. Body, "of Wolverhampton." I felt a little like Iscariot, I must confess, when, passing out by the side door, I found Mr. Body, arrayed in priest's cloak, standing there to shake hands with members of the congregation as they passed. I thought I might get by unobserved; but no, he insisted on a shake, and said in a cheery tone, "Good-bye, your face is very familiar to me at this Mission, though I don't know your name. Are you working in London?" I did not tell him my name; I only told him half my work; and omitted to mention that I was doing the Mission for a Daily Paper. I wonder whether, had you known my mission, you would have felt as I did, that I was grasping the hand of an honest man, at all events.

MASS AT MIDNIGHT AND MID-DAY.

To those who attentively study worship as the expression of religious thought, it will be even more interesting to trace the realization of those ideas under ordinary than under exceptional aspects; just as the physician, instead of devoting himself entirely or principally to the pathology of the morbid subject, studies hygiene and the ordinary working of the healthy system. So it is that, having recently chronicled in these pages my experiences of the Twelve Days' Mission, I append an account of two Christmas-day "Masses" at which I was privileged to "assist." The former subject represented even Ritualistic religious life at fever heat; the latter presents us with the normal and equable course of religious worship in a body which, whether we choose to realize the fact or not, is a large and continually-increasing element in the Church of England. Such undesigned evidence is more convincing than that which is somewhat obtrusively volunteered at Revival Services, or elicited in a one-sided, and therefore unsatisfactory manner in religious prosecutions. It is worth while to see what these people have to say for themselves in those expressions of

their religious thought which, whatever else we may think of them, we cannot doubt to be perfectly genuine and conscientious.

On Christmas-eve, then, at an hour when most reasonable people were thinking of retiring to bed, I turned my face eastwards for the purpose of attending midnight "Mass" at St. Alban's, Holborn. I was told that service began at eleven o'clock, so made a point of being in church a quarter before. Although I found on arriving there that Mass did not begin until half-past eleven, there was a considerable congregation of both sexes assembled even then; and my punctuality enabled me to witness one or two interesting matters. For instance, I saw all the floral arrangements and draping of the altar, which occupied a full half hour, and were perfect of their kind; only I fancy the white frontal never gives quite an adequate idea of the richness and costliness of the material. The white hangings on either side of the altar, as well as the draperies for the stands containing the Epistle and Gospel, being of white thick material with deep red edges, were very suggestive of blankets. Then again, although the candles at St. Alban's are now matter of history, and the whole sacrarium was one blaze of light, I do not think I could have formed an idea of the number of those candles had I not seen the actual lighting up. It took three gentlemen in puce cassocks a quarter of an hour by the clock to light

the candles only, the gas being undertaken by another. The post of tallow-chandler to St. Alban's must be a lucrative one. Then again, from being so early, I had an opportunity of seeing the Confessional at work. There are three or four in the church, consisting simply of a screen curtained off from the congregation, and suggestive of little privacy. I was also amazed at the short time the penitents took to confess. It appeared to me, if I had only had to confess the sins of one single day, it would have taken me much longer; but then we ordinary people do not understand these things yet. On the stroke of 11.30 the procession entered with four large banners. It consisted of forty persons in all, the majority being "nice little singing boys" "in surplices white," some with red cassocks, others black. Singing men followed; then three "priests," including Mr. Mackonochie, who were not going to take part in the celebration, and were therefore vested only in uncomfortably short surplices with what looked to my uninitiated eyes like rumpled Oxford hoods twisted round their necks; after these followed the celebrant, with epistoler and gospeller in gorgeous golden vestments that certainly would have stood upright without any priests inside them. So they passed to the sacrarium, which I ought to mention had been previously well fumigated with incense by one of the men in puce. No incense was used during the celebration.

The processional hymn was Gregorian and dreary, suggesting a cheerful funeral ; but when the processional cross and banners reached the chancel, and priests and choir were "posed" amid those brilliant lights and gorgeous flowers, the scene—as a spectacle—was perfect. The Communion Service of the Church of England was then proceeded with, and little variety introduced, except in so far that everything was as ornate as possible, and every opportunity of musical adjunct was seized. Novello's "Adeste Fideles" was well rendered by the choir, and "Hark, the herald angels sing," by choir and congregation before and after Communion—or rather one ought to say before and after the place where the people usually communicate ; for, strange to say, out of that vast congregation not a single person partook of the Sacrament at that Christmas-day celebration ! It was evidently understood that we were present at a Sacrifice, not at a Communion. There, surely, lies the revolution of all our old-fashioned ideas on the matter. We are not there to do something ourselves, and to get help therefrom to do our duty better and make our lives more what they should be ; *nous avons changé tout cela*. Something is done for us by the Priest, and *ex opere operato*, we are to be the better for it. Surely there is no lack of charity in saying that this theory over-lies every detail of the "Mass" where, out of so many assisting, not one communicates. Accept this

theory, and the most elaborate ceremonial is, of course, intelligible. To me, who cannot accept it, and to those who think with me, perfect as we confess the performance on æsthetic principles, it is overlaid with ceremonies that, until we develope considerably, must for us be meaningless. The genuflexions, changes of pose, &c., were intricate to a degree. One dreaded to think of the amount of "drill" they must involve. Then, again, the Lord's Prayer in the Post Communion is sung to a florid air, as was the Gospel to a monotonous Gregorian melody. Positively, I did not know what was going on until they got nearly to the end of it. Fancy the Lord's Prayer sung! Mr. Mackonochie himself preached a ten minutes' sermon; but evidently made no point of it, or else the text, "Full of Grace and Truth," might have inspired him with words worth listening to at that particular hour, when the greatest event in all the world's history was being commemorated. But, I repeat, we had not come "to hear sermons." We were there to attend a gorgeous sacrifice—the sacrifice of the Mass. And gorgeous it was. I could not, however, but confess to myself, as the interest culminated with the great bell of the church ringing out into the midnight, at the climax of consecration, that such a ceremony no more embodied my own religious life than *Traviata* does the ordinary life of thousands who are thrilled by it at the opera.

Coming home through the populous streets—populous at 1 A.M.—I could not but think as I met sot after sot, male and female, anticipating Christmas in their own swinish manner—surely it is well to have them rather anticipate it as I saw them by hundreds at St. Alban's, sitting clothed and in their right minds! The method seems to us a bit roundabout and un-English; but surely the end is good, if it only saved one such man or woman from self. Such a contrast makes one very “broad” indeed.

Twelve hours later I found myself attending mid-day Mass at St. Mary Magdalene's, Paddington. I might have chosen a “higher” celebration had not my religious dissipation of the previous night told upon my morning dreams. At St. Mary's ritualism was in embryo only. The vestments were seen there in all their native ugliness, for they were made of white linen, which, to use a milliner's term, does not “hang” well; and, moreover, lacking the accessory of colour, they spoil the *tout ensemble*. The altar was artistically arranged with flowers, drapery, and candles, and a modest procession, with two banners, commenced the High Celebration. The service itself wandered more widely from the Prayer-book than at St. Alban's, and I counted no less than eight interpolations in the shape of Introit, Gradual, Offertory, “Communion,” Nunc Dimittis, Sacramental Hymns, &c. The effect of this continual introduction of texts of Scripture, often irrelevant, and repeated with

wearisome iteration, is fidgeting in the extreme, and quite mars the severe beauty of our English Communion Service, by assimilating it to the Romish Mass. This is, of course, intended. Again, the number of communicants was comparatively small. Speaking roughly, I should say that, out of a very large congregation, not more than twenty-five men and a little over fifty women presented themselves. Of the rest, a large number were evidently less impregnated with the sacrificial theory than attracted by curiosity and the musical service, which is decidedly above par. You could judge this by noticing the number who sat during celebration instead of kneeling in the unmistakable posture assumed by Ritualistic *habitués*.

However, here is the fact, illustrated almost at antipodes in the two churches I selected. The sacrificial theory of the Eucharist—that is, the Romish doctrine of the Mass—is flourishing, in various grades, in the Established Church. Those who have adopted and introduced it have done so energetically and in evident good faith. It is an anxious question for the unbiassed moralist to determine whether or not the result will be enervating to the moral sense, leading men to rely on something external to themselves, a merely mechanical transaction on their behalf by a priest, instead of trusting to that purity of life and faith which the Church of England requires in the worthy communi-

cant, as constituting the very means by which he communicates in any real or practical sense. This appears the great danger of the theory. That it will drive devotees to Rome there seems little cause to fear, in fact it ought to act as a safety-valve for their enthusiasm. They have here at home all they could possibly desire in Rome, save the Pope's authority and the vaunted Catholic unity; and surely the Œcumenical Council has already opened their eyes on these subjects. Possibly, therefore, the moral effect on individuals is all that need concern us; and with regard to that we may perhaps safely use Gamaliel's argument: "Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men it will come to nought; but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

DOING DECORATIONS.

THERE are two well-defined and widely differing types of young-ladyhood, who gravitate respectively towards the world and the Church. The former think officers "ducks;" the latter speak of the curate as "dear" Mr. So-and-so—dear "Father" So-and-so, if they are sufficiently "advanced." The one are great at mess-balls, floral fêtes, and walking in the Zoo—are, for the most part, handsome, dashing girls, perfectly alive to the fact, and dressing accordingly. The latter are best described by the epithet "pretty," not always young, and invariably reckon frumpishness as a cardinal virtue. The military young lady is an honest, open, undisguised flirt. The ecclesiastical sister does her flirtation circuitously by means of district visiting, Sunday schools, and—which is to our present purpose—church decorations. As Eastertide and Christmas come round the mind of the ecclesiastical young lady is exercised on the subject of "monograms," "legends," and other curious paraphernalia of piety. Her goodness breaks out in evergreens and floral emblems; and on one and all of these important subjects her "guide, philosopher, and friend" is

naturally the curate. She journeys with him to Covent Garden Market and buys camellias, at ruinous rates, sufficient to dine a poor family for every flower; but it is nice for the curate, and looks pretty in church, and so the young devotee "goes in," as she terms it in mild ecclesiastical slang, for the camellias, determining to "save it in something else."

Now it has been my habit for several years to "do" the Christmas decorations of the metropolitan churches, and chronicle the same for the delectation of a too unæsthetic British public. I have described, that is, the ecclesiastical transformation scene as it burst upon my astonished gaze on Christmas morning. This year I had determined to portray what may be—I hope not irreverently—termed the dress rehearsal, or putting up the decorations on Christmas Eve; but, in the course of my peregrinations, I saw the ladies, old and young, at work. I went—if I may preserve my histrionic metaphor—*behind* the scenes; and what I saw is so characteristic of a peculiar but growing type of English life, that I will even substitute a full, true, and particular account thereof for what I had previously determined to write. Let not my fair devotees be alarmed, or the frequent blush mantle the cheek of the reverend Lothario. Not by the faintest clue will I give an index to the locality of my several descriptions; though, at the same time, I guarantee that every

portrait shall be faithfully drawn from a living model.

Here is, first of all, a church we will call St. George and the Dragon, Camden Town, principally for the reason that it lies as nearly as possible in another ecclesiastical hemisphere. St. George's is High and Dry, the incumbent being considered "Broad"—in doctrine, not dimensions—by the young ladies, and the curate growing the beard of a muscular Christian. St. George's goes in for decorations all over the sacred edifice; and the unenlightened lay people will perhaps be surprised to hear that their profusion is rather a sign of unorthodoxy than the reverse. As the doctrinal thermometer rises the decorations gradually retire into the chancel, or the "sanctuary" as it is termed—a slender wreath of green stuff up the gas standards being deemed sufficient for the laity, while the curate in the stalls sits quite uncomfortably upon holly, and the preacher in the pulpit looks like a jack-in-the-green on May Day. Nothing of the kind at St. George and the Dragon's. From the east window right down to the western porch every square inch is bedizened. For weeks before, fair fingers have been cutting out the most uncomfortable-looking hieroglyphs, orthodox in proportion to their illegibility, and the "mess," which has hitherto driven housemaids to distraction, culminates in the schoolroom, where the dear creatures stint themselves of their natural refreshment, and stain

their fingers with twisting wreaths, happy if they can only get a soft-voiced clerical gentleman to "hold the other end" for them. They picnic off soup brewed in the soup-kitchen hard by, and brought in hot and hot by the curate, and afterwards regale themselves, seated on heaps of green stuff, with impromptu tea, going home dead tired at night, only to commence their weary round the next morning. St. George's goes in greatly for cotton-wool letters and powdered alum on the ivy leaves, meant to look like frost and snow, but making the church rather resemble a large Twelfth cake. Here is one young lady who has made her pretty hands rough as a washerwoman's by dabbling in the alum water; and the worst of it all is, her ivy leaves look rather as if they had grown on a house that had been recently whitewashed, and the bearded curate might have been wrapped up in cotton-wool for the rheumatism, he is so fluffy all down his long black coat from the letters he has been superintending.

St. Margaret the Martyr is an advanced Ritualistic church, where the "Sisters" wear "habits," consisting of skimpy petticoats, poke bonnets, and surreptitious beads. They only decorate the chancel at St. Margaret's; and the architect has been so lavish of adornments in the way of painting and sculpture at the beautiful east end, that he has left little space for further ornamentation. You would fancy from

the semi-conventual condition of St. Margaret's, and the demure looks of the Sisters as they draggle their linsey-woolsey skirts through the street mud, that decorating would with them be a very dismal process indeed. Not a bit of it. At untimely hours on Christmas Eve the fair sisters bear their green and fragrant burdens from their own "Home" to the monastic shades of the "Clergy House," where, after compline, a very toothy little supper, by no means of the parched-pea order, is served up in refectory, and much is the mirth that goes on between the cassocked "Fathers" and the Sisters. Right through the small hours do they work with a will, putting holly berries in all sorts of impossible places, and even climbing to the top of a tall ladder to blazon the chancel arch with the sweet old Christmas legend. The Fathers—delicate creatures!—drop off one by one to bed in their cells, as they have to be up at three for the "first office;" Sister Seraphine presides at the teaboard for early breakfast, and all assemble at matins as though nothing had happened; the church ablaze with decorations, and the souls of the faithful refreshed with the nocturnal work of these cloistered Fathers and Sisters. Rumour does say that when Father Arthur turned into his cell he found an apple-pie bed made for him, and the sleeves of his monastic nightgown sewed up, and that sly little Sister Alice looked very red when he talked about it in refectory next morning; but rumour

always did draw the long bow, and Father Arthur is, I believe, far too sweet a preacher, and has much too nice eyes, for Sister Alice to play such a cruel trick upon him.

St. Simon Stylites is an Evangelical church, which the profane and the Puseyite vilify by calling a preaching-shop. By some occult law of ecclesiastical nature, Evangelical curates nearly always have red shoulder-of-mutton whiskers; and the Perpetual Curate of St. Simon's is no exception to the rule. He is single, adored by the ladies old and young, and a distant relation of a colonial bishop. There is no schoolroom at St. Simon's. The Perpetual Curate does not believe in the schoolmaster, and deems all worldly knowledge "carnal;" so they have to "decorate" in the church itself. The raw material is brought up to the very porch in a greengrocer's cart, and woven into wreaths and interlaced triangles on the actual spot where it is to be used. Many of the decorators of St. Simon's are veterans in the cause—grim females of a weird and determined aspect, who would scare any one except a very Evangelical parson indeed. But our Perpetual Curate is equal to the occasion, and makes them work like converted niggers, on the weakest tea, and without, I believe, entertaining the most distant matrimonial ideas as to any one of their number. There is a certain Maria Jane—a combination of names not uncommon among elderly spinsters—who has been attached to St. Simon's from early

girlhood, when she was employed, as a gaunt hoyden of six feet, all arms and legs, to do the twiddly wreaths on the top of the gas-burners. She is now a grizzled spinster, promoted to the glorification of the pulpit, and sits on the top step all Christmas Eve labouring her poor old scraggy bird's claws of fingers off, while the Perpetual Curate rekindles long dormant flames of jealousy in her bosom by flirting with pretty Miss Jones at the suggestive altar rail below.

The Episcopal Chapel of SS. Boanerges, or the Sons of Thunder, is Broad and ugly, and its staff of clergy are muscular Christians of the most pronounced type, bearded, and prone to pipes and the "Fortnightly." Up to the present year the Sons of Thunder have deemed their unbeauteous edifice "when unadorned adorned the most;" but an æsthetic element has found its way even in among the dingy high-backed pews and three-decker which stand like ecclesiastical anachronisms at SS. Boanerges. Fair fingers of matrons and maidens have this year worked into a simple scroll, above the communion table, the old happy Christmas legend of "Peace on earth, goodwill to men," which the voices of little children will sing so appropriately on Christmas morn in the gloomy old chapel. It is well, surely, that some little softening influence should find its way even into our churches and chapels on that one day at least in the year, lest our theology grow

as cold and hard as the every-day life outside the church porch. The time has gone by for railing at every little adornment which goes to make the church the poor man's home, sniffing incipient Popery in every new gaslight, or Ritualism in each simple decoration. Even the judicious Hooker protested against God being "served slovenly." We may smile at our enthusiastic ladies, young and old, at Christmas, but they are unconsciously exercising a softening influence upon society; overdoing it a little perhaps sometimes—as who does not?—but still labouring appropriately and more in their place than on the platform or in the senate.

A word in conclusion to the curates. They looked at me as fiercely as curates can look when I invaded the sacred territory of schoolroom, refectory, and church to see the ladies "doing decorations." Each and all glared, as much as to say, "What can that fellow want here?" They thought, perhaps, I was an archdeacon in disguise come down to check their pretty devices. They see now what I wanted, and will, I hope, in future years, take care to keep me posted up as to the last new things in Christmas decorations.

MIDNIGHT MASS.

CHRISTMAS EVE may be appropriately described in modern ecclesiastical language as "The Great Day of the Preparation." It is the time when those branches especially of the National Church which build upon objective teaching set themselves in order to welcome the dawn of the Incarnation, of the greatest event but one which is connected with the history of humanity. From this fact as a centre have radiated all those social influences which make Christmas essentially the Family Festival of the year, and which have to a large extent merged its religious in its merely festal character. For weeks before Christmas the ladies, old and young, who are attached to the different churches, have been—metaphorically, at least—working their fingers off at monograms, texts, and legends for the decoration of the sacred edifices; and Christmas Eve is the time for putting them up. A peep into the different London churches on that evening—and I peeped into a good many—was a sight not easily to be forgotten. Here was a lady standing on a ladder, decorating the chancel arch; here another twisting wreaths round a gas standard, or blazoning

a stall-head with immortelles. In all I found the clergy and their fair friends full of preparations for the morrow. The more advanced Ritualistic churches confined their adornments to the chancel, and some few eschewed floral decorations altogether; but in most—in all but one, in fact—I found them up and doing, and ready, moreover, to give all information as to the plans for the morrow. The single exception was All Saints', Margaret Street—once the coryphæus in choral services and bedizenments of all kinds. I found the church in gloom, with the single exception of one gas-jet at the east end, and at the door I was met by an ascetic-looking verger, who might have been Gabriel Grub prior to conversion. He said the clergy of All Saints' objected to publicity, and declined—so he phrased it—"affording any facilities" to those who would chronicle their doings. I am bound in justice to say that All Saints' stood in a minority of one in this respect.

The great event of Christmas Eve is Midnight Mass, as it is termed in the more advanced churches—or midnight communion, in those of a less pronounced type. It may be remembered that the present Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster has discountenanced midnight masses as tending to irregularities, and some few churches of the Establishment have done the same; but in others the custom still exists, and, by way of going

to the very headquarters of Ritualism, I selected St. Alban's, Holborn, as the basis of my operations for that evening. Going, according to my custom, to reconnoitre in the afternoon, I found a few persons in the church engaged in private devotion, and two priests receiving confession. I presented myself at one of the confessionals, and learned the evening's programme. There were to be no floral decorations, the reason given by the Father with whom I conversed being the very practical one that they "smelt." Only the lights in the sanctuary would be augmented, no inapt symbol of the great event to be commemorated—the first shining of the Light of the World!

At half-past eleven o'clock the sonorous bell of St. Alban's rang out above the more than secular sounds of Brooke Street, Gray's Inn Lane, and a large congregation filled the spacious church for the First or Midnight Celebration. The chancel only was decorated, with the single exception of the font, which had a few flowers on it. The east end, however, blazed with lights, and was rich with white silk hangings. Choice flowers were on the altar, and about a hundred tapers surrounded the central crucifix, while some fifty in each of two large candelabra flanked the Sacred Table at the north and south. Banners of rich device were also placed at frequent intervals, and a large picture of the Virgin and Child on the south chancel wall had pots of flowers in

front. There was no procession, strictly so called ; but a small choir entered from the vestry, consisting of ten or twelve boys and men, the preacher, a cross-bearer, the celebrant, epistoler and gospeller, with acolytes. The vestments of the officiating priests were rich in the extreme, while that of the preacher was quite plain. An Introit was sung from the 2nd Psalm, and the Commandments recited in monotone, a bright Kyrie succeeding each. The Collect for the Festival and the Gospel were given in full inflection—that is, they were sung instead of being read, the congregation prostrating themselves at every clause therein, as also in the Nicene Creed, where the mystery of the Incarnation was enunciated. The sermon was preached by a Father who was habited in simple surplice, hood, and stole, and took his text from St. John i. 11, 12 : “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.” Commencing with a graphic sketch of the details of the Nativity, he dwelt on the quietness and poverty which marked the advent of the Messiah ; and yet the same characteristics are often reproduced now ; the same carelessness is in the world, and Christ, as it were, thrust into a corner. He reveals Himself even now to a narrower circle than of old. He comes to His Church—the world rejects Him. Even in the hearts of many of the elect the witness is true, “He comes to His own, and His own receive Him not.” In the retired cell of a collected heart, free from

earthly distractions, God now finds a home. When the heart becomes an oratory, then Christ dwells in it. This is the great lesson to learn, that Jesus dwells in the heart of the lowly. A chain of miracles is expressly adapted to the special needs of each—Judæan shepherds and Chaldean astronomers. So now does He manifest Himself in ways exactly adapted to the character of all. The desire to know Him secures the knowledge.

The sermon, which was extempore, was brief and telling in its character, and was followed by the hymn "Adeste Fideles," sung as solo, duet, trio, and quartette for the principal voices; each verse being followed by a full chorus, in which all of the vast congregation appeared to join. The Communion Office was then proceeded with. The consecration of the elements was performed in so low a tone as to be almost silent, and the great bell of the church rang out long and loud to tell outsiders that the climax of the sacramental worship had come. The congregation prostrated themselves reverently; and the long silence which ensued was perhaps the most telling effect of the whole ceremony. At length the organ played a few soft notes, and a sacramental hymn was sung by a single soprano voice, followed by chorus. The Communion strictly so called followed, a small fraction only of the large congregation receiving the elements, and each being interrogated by a layman, standing at the chancel rail, before

being permitted to present himself or herself. There could have been scarcely twenty communicants out of so large a congregation. It was a midnight mass or celebration rather than a Communion.

But, however it might differ from the theory or practice of the majority in the National Church, there could be no doubt but that it was as a spectacle impressive—one had almost said perfect; and certainly a more satisfactory way of welcoming Christmas morn than that which met one's eyes and ears on emerging into Brooke Street and Holborn, where the roysterers were, at the small hour of the morning, already anticipating Christmas mirth—alas, the term!—in their own unholy way. There were many poor in the congregation. Had there been only one rescued from the squalor and vice surrounding the House of God it would have been a result worth all the effort of the Midnight Mass.

WATCH-NIGHT.

THERE is a noticeable tendency at the present day to revert to the old method of parable-teaching for the conveyance of moral and religious truths—of catching, that is, at any circumstance or event of common life likely to arrest men's attention, and making it pave the way to something beyond itself. This used to be called, disparagingly, "improving the occasion," and was rather looked down upon than otherwise in the Established Church. But a happy change has supervened in this respect, more due, perhaps, to influences outside than within the pale of the Church. Just as Rowland Hill grudged giving all the good tunes to secular compositions (he used a stronger and coarser expression, by the way), so has it been seen unwise to abandon as the mark of a party that method of instruction which had the direct sanction of the highest authority of all. He preached amid the hills of Galilee, with birds and flowers for His text. The seedsman scattering his grain on the fields by the lake-side gave a turn to the discourse; and so, too, it is no longer thought undignified to let passing events inspire the address from the pulpit, or even afford

occasion for special services. One need do no more than instance the frequency of Harvest Festivals in support of such assertion. So, too, with reference to New Year's Day, and its Vigil, here called Watch-Night—a name, again, which a few years ago would have seemed to restrict our remarks to Nonconformity, but is far from doing so now. In the Church of England nothing was more common than to be reminded from the pulpit that the commencement of the civil year was unimportant in the Church's regards; that the first of January was her Feast of the Circumcision; and that Advent Sunday was the Church's New Year's Day, when we turned back in our Prayer-books to the old Epistles and Gospels, and in our Bibles to the old Lessons once more. But, as we well know, the New Year has a deep and solemn significance for us all. The mere reading or writing this new date is full of meaning. The most thoughtless become for the moment thoughtful when he hears the "wild bells ring out in the wild sky—ring out the old, ring in the new!" Strange, perhaps, that the mere passage from December 31st to January 1st should have this significance—a significance which, 120 years ago, did not exist; but it *has* such significance, and the Church of England lately, in common with other religious bodies, has recognised the fact, and celebrated Watch-Night, or the Vigil of New Year's Day, with solemn services and suitable addresses, a

few of the more noteworthy of which are subjoined. A distinguished Nonconformist minister, in dwelling upon the influence which these epochs and their observance have upon men's minds, assured me that many members of his congregation would choose Watch-Night for renewing vows, say, of abstinence from intoxicating drink during the year. The ceremonies connected with its observance are of a simple, but interesting, kind. Few sermons, comparatively, are preached in the chapels, but homely addresses take their turn with earnest prayer. These go on until about five minutes to midnight, when silent prayer is engaged in. The clock strikes midnight, and, after a brief pause, *vivâ-voce* prayer is again resumed. Customs vary with varying churches and denominations. In the Established Church there is generally a sermon. The "high" churches have, of course, celebration of the Holy Communion, and some content themselves with a solemn *Te Deum*, after evening prayer. Such a method of observance, however differing in detail, cannot fail to strike one as an appropriate way of commencing a New Year; and the fact of the Vigil occurring this year on a Sunday afforded, of course, increased opportunities of solemnity, and secured larger congregations at the various churches and chapels. Let us visit a few such churches and chapels, taking them *nullo ordine sed confuse*. It is impossible, when all the interest culminates on one particular hour, to be

very discursive in our observations ; but we can glance at a few different places of worship.

Here is, first of all, a church of the Establishment decorated just as it was last Sunday for Christmas. It is interesting to notice how the preacher is blending the old ecclesiastical ideas of Advent with the newer—at least newer in that particular locality— notion of Watch-Night. “Standing now,” he says, “as we do, on the very frontier-line that separates two years, it is thus I counsel you in the spirit of David’s couplet, to ‘remember the past,’ to ‘muse upon’ God’s works in it. Do this with reference to the immediate past—the year we have pictured as lying like a dead man before us, whom we are about to bury in the crowded cemetery of Time. Before you do so—before you look your last upon its outward semblance, do what none can do for you, look honestly, in genuine self-examination, at its lights and shadows, and pray to God to enable you to eschew the evil and to follow the good. Do it especially with regard to the life you have lived here in church. This is incomparably your highest life, the life that will lengthen out into eternity, when the little ‘summer’ of earthly life is ‘over and gone,’ passed away, as one year is passing into another. Go back to the Advent of last year ; and, comparing it with that just past, see if you have truer views of your duty here as preparing you for that life of which

Advent teaches. See if one more year's study of the perfect life of Jesus has had its due effect in perfecting *your* life. Did your views of Christian duty in the year that is gone come out clearer and stronger from the light you had gained in the great objective teaching—the Church's yearly object-lesson—of our blessed Lord's Incarnate Life and History?" This sermon concluded with a wish that the night's watching might be instrumental to the hearers carrying out in the future the great command, "Be vigilant." It is now the hour when church-folk are turning out of church and going home—some to stay at home, others to await the "late service." Let us "look in," it is all we can do, at this little chapel in a back street. It belongs to a sect called the "Particular Baptists," and about a dozen people who have been at evening service are sitting there to wait for the Watch-Night devotions—some hours off yet. The minister's desk is empty; but a homely man standing below it, at what would be the parish clerk's desk in a church, is reading verses of a hymn, which the congregation sing after him. People come and go, almost as in a Roman Catholic church; and curious passers-by peep in, and wonder what it is all about, come out, and go on their way as ignorant as before. Here is "Providence Hall," in another obscure locality, the proprietor and minister of which place of worship pursues the old traditional trade of

the "carpenter," his shop standing at the very door of his chapel. The congregation gathered at seven o'clock, and mean to remain until midnight, "to pray the Old Year out;" and a board at the entrance invites all to "come and be welcome."

Eleven o'clock. A "High" Church in the suburbs, bright and cheerful, preparing for late Evensong, with Midnight Mass to follow; and a vast congregation assembling. Not so in town; there is a nest of "High" Churches around the Portland Road Station, where the congregations are assembled—in the street, but the churches are diligently shut. They have not yet got to recognise "Watch-Night;" and the would-be congregations return home disappointed. Not so at the High Church *par excellence* of London (we are not specifying names or localities). There the building at half-past eleven is dark and sombre, and a popular "Father," habited only in a cassock, mounts the pulpit to preach. But we pass on, for we have determined to see the Old Year out elsewhere. This is the little chapel of the Moravians in Fetter Lane. Abroad, and in the larger settlements of England, Watch-Night is a "night to be much remembered" among these simple folk. The Moravians, as we know, are great at hymns, and this is the one they select to sing the Old Year out and the New Year in. It is sung to a magnificent old chorale, which has been impressed by Mendelssohn into one of his best known works:—

“ Now let us praise the Lord,
With body, soul, and spirit,
Who doth such wondrous things
Beyond our sense and merit.
Who from our mother's womb,
And earliest infancy
Hath done great things for us—
Praise him eternally !”

Entering the chapel at ten minutes to twelve, I found a minister reading a kind of homily to a largish congregation. He proceeded until the clock in the chapel ticked the hour, and immediately, with an almost electric effect, the whole congregation fell on their knees and sang the above verse. A short prayer followed, and then the second verse was sung, the congregation having risen to their feet :—

“ O, Gracious God, bestow
On us, while here remaining
An ever-cheerful mind ;
Thy peace be ever reigning.
Preserve us in the faith
And Christian holiness—
That, when we go from hence,
We may behold thy face.”

The usual order of proceedings is that a Love Feast is celebrated, the “*Memorabilia*” of the past year are read, and then the congregation engage in singing hymns and prayer until close upon midnight. Directly this sounds a blast of trumpets, trombones, and other brass instruments ushers triumphantly in the new-born year. This applies to the Moravian settlements abroad, and also to the more important,

such as Fulneck, &c., in England. London, I was informed, was "*only* a town-settlement." After the hymn a brief benediction followed ; and the minister, in the name of the pastor, dismissed the congregation, wishing them "A Happy New Year."

Thus was it that, in one at least of its Protean phases of life, the great city passed from one year to another. The principal fact which seemed to strike one was the presence of life—a moving of the dry bones on all sides. Another was the gradual removal of old landmarks in the shape of narrow and exclusive lines of thought and practice. We have seen this to be the case in the adoption of the idea of "Watch-Night" into the Church of England. Another noteworthy instance was mentioned by the Nonconformist minister quoted above, who boasted that the Society of Friends, who stand aloof from human ordinances of all kinds, had permitted him this year, in the very centre of their local influence, to preach Baptism and the Lord's Supper at one of their chapels. Without being chimerical or enthusiastic, or at all taking these things to mean more than they do mean, one may be pardoned, at least on Watch-Night, for regarding them as, to some extent at least, symptoms and evidences of "A good time coming!"

NEW YEAR'S EVE AT ST. ALBAN'S.

AMONG the promptings of what may be called, in the truest sense of the term, Natural Religion, none surely is more instructive than that which leads men to observe with peculiar solemnity the entrance upon a new year of life. It is, if nothing else, the making a step in the dark. It is the entrance upon a new epoch in existence, of which the manifold "changes and chances" prevent our forecasting the issue. True, the demarcation line is but an arbitrary one; yet there are few, even of the most thoughtless, who can set foot across the line which separates one year from another without feeling in some degree the significance of the act. The "wild bells" rung out "in the wild sky" warn even the midnight reveller of the lapse of time; and the new date which we have to write is in itself a silent monitor that we are one stage nearer the end of our journey. It would seem, then, that at least a brief pause and a passing season of thoughtfulness should be to responsible beings a purely spontaneous act, and certainly one of those opportunities which no form of religion could afford to miss. And yet, for a long time, that which may perhaps, without offence, be termed ecclesiasticism,

sternly refused to recognise this occasion. The line was rigidly drawn between the civil New Year and the Church's New Year. We were told that Advent was the beginning of our sacred year, and that then was the time for those serious thoughts and those good resolutions which proverbially accompany them. Or if not Advent, Christmas Eve was the fitting era for Christians to work with most profound self-searching. Even now that one body of Christians which represents the most advanced sacerdotalism, the Roman branch of the Church Catholic, refuses to endorse this prompting of natural religion. Though New Year's Eve is also the vigil of the Circumcision, yet that vigil is kept with no special observances. The Catholic, as he delights exclusively to call himself, is not encouraged publicly, at all events, to hallow the entrance on a new year of existence with devotional observances. The Anglican branch of the National Church, however, which at one time showed this Romish exclusiveness, has shaken from herself the trammels of imitation, and taken its own independent stand upon instincts which it sees must not be ignored. An old disciple of the now wellnigh obsolete Puseyism or Tractarianism would have shuddered at the idea of a Watch-Night service as symptomatic of the conventicle. Even now, whilst adopting the idea, the Ritualist protests against it as un-Catholic ; but wisely adapts himself to circumstances since he cannot adapt circumstances to himself.

With that larger Church of England, especially with the Wesleyan branch, which, numerically at least, represents the National Church, Watch-Night has ever been the especial festival of the religious year. Though no Saints' Days stud the simple calendar of that body, though even the solemn seasons of Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter are ignored—still the vigil of the New Year is a Festival of Obligation: and the adoption of this idea by the most advanced school of ritualistic thought may possibly turn out a development that shall pave the way towards an end which all tacitly or avowedly seek to compass—the reunion of a now divided Christendom.

In projecting any survey of religious London on the last night of the year, one naturally visited that which is regarded as the acme of ecclesiasticism—St. Alban's, Holborn. If any of the London clergy held themselves aloof from observances which could possibly be called “un-Catholic,” it might fairly be expected to be the band of priests ranged under the banner of that uncompromising champion of ritualism, “Father Mac”—as his adherents elect to call the Rev. A. H. Mackonochie. But the priests of St. Alban's are wise in their generation, and know that their Church, above all others, situated in one of the poorest neighbourhoods, cannot, without extreme unwisdom, let slip so golden an opportunity of appealing to the sympathies of the people.

Consequently, St. Alban's is thrown open for a midnight service on the last day of the year. "No bell is rung," said the Rev. Father Stanton, the chief promoter of this and many other methods of getting at the poor of Baldwin's Gardens, "and yet the people come." Come they did, at all events, that night. They did really, at the ultra-Ritualistic church of St. Alban's, recollect, what they only do by a pleasant euphemism to meetings by limelight at Charing Cross or Sunday demonstrations in Hyde Park—the working men, and still more the working women and children, came literally "in crowds," notwithstanding the pouring rain. Nay, more; Father Stanton succeeded in what it had been supposed only Roman Catholics and Dissenters could get them to do—namely, come "in their working clothes." And what did this zealous young priest do with them when he got them there? Did he receive them with a correct and "æsthetic service," which certainly would have driven them all out again, and prevented their ever coming any more? By no means. There was not a symptom of ritualism to be seen. The beautiful chancel was not used. The hymns were special ones culled from the Wesleyan manuals. There was no choir. Father Stanton was the sole "minister," and he wore no vestments; not even the possibly obnoxious surplice. It was the most simple, unornate, but, on that very account, the most Catholic and appro-

priate service that could have been devised for the occasion.

Precisely at half-past eleven, Father Stanton mounted the pulpit and requested the congregation to follow him in the first hymn, after he had sung it to them, which he did in a not very musical solo ; but the chorus was very effective. It was as follows :—

“ Shall we meet beyond the river,
Where the surges cease to roll,
Where in all the bright for ever
Sorrow ne'er shall press the soul ?
Shall we meet ? Shall we meet ?
Shall we meet ? Shall we meet ?
Shall we meet beyond the river
Where the surges cease to roll ? ”

After the hymn, Mr. Stanton read Psalm xxvii. 15, and delivered a brief extempore address on the duty of recognising the goodness of God while “ in the land of the living.” The problem started by the preacher was, How is it, if God be good, that anybody has a chance of going to hell ? In solving this problem by the answer of free will, I make bold to say this Ritualistic preacher out-preached any Wesleyan in the great metropolis. Matter, manner, and energy were of the very essence of the conventicle ; and the congregation, which was essentially a poor one, literally hung upon his lips as he contrasted God's goodness with man's misrepresentations of Him. Lest men should only fear God, he turned their attention to the story of the Incarnation—God at

Christmastide, cradled at Bethlehem, crucified on Calvary. In a Dissenting chapel I am very much afraid Father Stanton's sermon would have been called "rant." At St. Alban's, Holborn, it was a very energetic and effective sermon indeed. "Do not say you must be damned, dear friends," he concluded; "do not harbour the black sin of despair. It is a lie. Say, 'O God, Thou art my God.' If a fellow only hates his sins because he thinks they will pitchfork him into hell, that is not repentance. Love God as perfect goodness; then you will see all with a new light. Then you will be truly penitent, as frosts melt and flowers spring up when the sun shines."

A long silent prayer ensued as the church chimes rang in the new year, followed by an extempore prayer by the minister; after which the common hymn, "Guide us, O Thou great Jehovah," was sung to the tune of "Rousseau's Dream." At the last verse, "Come, Lord Jesus, take Thy waiting people home," Mr. Stanton desired us all to "sing out loud;" and I can answer for it that every man, woman, and child followed his injunction. He then continued his address. So did the congregation at St. Alban's inaugurate the new year of grace. "Go either to church or chapel." Such was the practical advice with which the address concluded. "I know many reasons why you may not like church. But, at all events, put yourselves on the side of God. Be on the side of the good, good God."

A SILENT SERVICE.

FOR some time past the attention of passers along Oxford Street—especially of those all-wise philosophers who study society *de haut en bas* from the knifeboard of an omnibus—had been arrested by a placard at the corner of Queen Street, near the Marble Arch, announcing the site of St. Saviour's Church for the Deaf and Dumb, the foundation-stone of which was to be solemnly laid by his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. No doubt the question of *Cui bono?* occurred even to other than very determined utilitarians; they asked themselves, very probably, what instruction could possibly accrue from a public service to those who could neither speak for themselves nor hear others speak to them. It may be also that this placard caused others besides myself to look for the first time in something more than a cursory way into the condition of those whom Dr. Johnson truly described as suffering from "the most desperate of human calamities"—the deaf-mutes. Beyond a general feeling of commiseration, it had not perhaps occurred to them to realize in what a complete prison-house the deprivation of speech and hearing shuts up the unfortunate sufferer; how

utterly it exiles him from the society of his fellow-creatures; or, on the other hand, how advanced a period of his education is implied in the need or mere possibility of a church. It has been truly said, that the uneducated deaf and dumb are practically atheists; and through what a weary course have they to go, from the first conception of the noun, or "name of anything," its expression in gesture and on the fingers, up through the intricate mazes of that language which our little ones imbibe so easily by hearing, and imitate so cleverly with their facile tongues, until at last they come to realize the idea of God, as abstract, perfect goodness! It has been well observed by an experienced teacher of deaf-mutes, that the most difficult idea to convey to them is that of simple existence, signified by the verb "to be"—the very title, we may recollect, by which God revealed Himself to the ancient Hebrew. Thanks, however, to the loving labours of those who have devoted life to this most forlorn portion of the human family, not only has this idea been grasped, but *Ecce signum!*—through the liberal charity of others, it has been put in the power of these poor brothers and sisters of ours to serve God with a "reasonable service."

Should any be still inclined to doubt the practical utility of such a temple[•] as this, or even be simply in search of a new "sensation," I would counsel them to attend, as I did, a Tuesday Evening Service for

the "Silent People," in the Church of St. Lawrence, Jewry, at eight o'clock. Arriving there early, I was surprised to find the fifteen or twenty deaf-mutes who had got before me engaged in a general "conversation." Though they were scattered at pretty wide intervals over a large church, the "gossip" was general and animated, by means of gesture, sign, and even attempted articulation. One gentleman was evidently quite facetious, and amused the others with a running fire of pleasantries. A young mother had her baby with her, the only living thing that was able to articulate; and, I am bound to say, it used its power as a British baby should under the circumstances. Eventually, some fifty or sixty deaf-mutes assembled; and at eight o'clock the service was commenced by the Rev. Samuel Smith, A.K.C., chaplain and secretary of the Association. It was a new and strange sight—the immense digital dexterity, the evidently copious vocabulary of "signs," and the expressive facial changes on the part of the chaplain; and in the congregation the almost painful attention with which every member of that quiet community followed the service. There was none of the listlessness that attaches to ordinary preaching and congregations, seeing that this speaker had to express every word and letter by means of gesture and sign, whilst the hearers were forced to keep on the *qui vive* to follow him. Most of the faces were intelligent-looking enough, though there was on one

or two that dull expression which we can well understand to result from congenital deafness. In fact, it would seem that, without the education provided through the instrumentality of this "sign-and-finger language," the hopeless sufferers must inevitably drift into idiocy.

Up to this time the labours of the Association in Aid of the Deaf and Dumb have been to hold as many as twelve services per week in different parts of London; to visit the deaf and dumb at their own homes; to assist those of good character in obtaining employment; and even to relieve them, when necessitous, by gifts or loans of money. And last, but not least, the object is to encourage the early training of deaf and dumb children preparatory to their admission into educational institutions. The principal Sunday service has hitherto been held at the Polytechnic Institution; but the great want of the Association has been a "local habitation," as well as a name—a nucleus for its good works such as that now provided, or shortly to be provided, in the building of which the Prince of Wales laid the foundation stone lately. This is to consist, not only of a church capable of accommodating 250 worshippers, but also of a large lecture hall 38 feet square, so that secular as well as religious instruction may be carried on within its walls.

Thus, then, this church of the Silent People forthwith takes its place among the institutions of London.

Though so much has been done, and a large moiety of the estimated cost is already provided, much yet remains to do, both to complete the building and also to enable the Association to extend its operations. To state that fact will be enough to stimulate those who let not their left hand know the good their right is doing—who need no exciting addresses any more than they sound a trumpet before their good deeds—whose charity, like that which will be celebrated at St. Saviour's, is literally Silent Service!

INNOCENTS' DAY.

WE scarcely realize to what an extent children are, at Christmastide, masters of the situation. Setting aside educational matters as inappropriate to that holiday season, there is perhaps no single branch of social progress in which we have developed so much or so satisfactorily as in all that relates to the youngsters. Take the department of juvenile literature, for instance. When we look at the gaudy gift-books crowding the shop windows—not only handsome outside but wholesome within—and then think of our wretched horn-books, our doleful legends of Tommy and Harry, and the lion and the mouse, with the few really eligible exceptions in the way of “Robinson Crusoe,” or “Sandford and Merton,” or the “Arabian Nights,” we seem almost to have realized one of the fairy tales in the last-mentioned work. The bitter pill is indeed cleverly gilded, and we are beguiled to learn in spite of ourselves; that is, we who have the good fortune to be boys and girls just now. So, too, in the matter of these Christmas pantomimes of which we always hear so much. Do our little masters and misses at all conceive the work that has been doing for them

throughout three months, during which, no doubt, they fancied they at school were the only working folks, and those lazy fellows did nothing but take a play or pantomime down from the shelf at Christmas and put it straight on the stage? Do they dream of what authors and artists and mechanists and ballet-masters have been devising and executing for their amusement? It is literally true that it is for *their* amusement, and that they are our masters. To whom else are those elaborate critiques addressed, but to those who, even more literally than the gods in the gallery themselves, are arbiters of the fate of each Christmas piece? Paterfamilias runs his eye down the newspaper page—why? To see which pantomime is likely to please the children most. Hear a *blasé* juvenile commending or condemning a pantomime—calling it “awful jolly,” or “no end stupid;” and the fate of that pantomime is sealed in the little *côterie* where that juvenile acts as oracle. And this truth of the gradual growth of juvenile supremacy extends to Sunday matters too. How many of us were carried back to our own childhood when poor little David Copperfield narrated his experiences in his pew at church! Who ever thought of making Sunday books other than didactic and dreadful then? Well, John Bunyan—yes, in his delicious story about Christian; but then the very exceptional character of the “Pilgrim’s Progress,” and the fact of its being the only story-book tole-

rated on a Sunday, made us half suspect it was an allegory, though we had no idea what that was. We looked at it suspiciously, as we did at the spoonful of raspberry jam which was too nice not to have an awful powder hidden somewhere underneath. With many of us, no doubt, the Bishop of Winchester's "Agatha," and other Sunday stories, marks an epoch when religious literature became tolerable; and for how long did that volume stand almost as alone and monumental as the glorious allegory of Bunyan itself? "The Distant Hills," and "The Old Man's Home," and "The Shadow of the Cross," were the portal, as it were, by which we passed into the happy present. Sunday services for children, too—whoever thought of those when we were young? How hopelessly over our heads the sermon used to fire! That was why we thought the clergyman such a dreadful character, second only to the doctor. He physicked us mentally as the doctor did bodily; and the worst of it was, his doses came round with distressing regularity. Now, Sunday services for the young, and sermons for children, are institutions. The compilers of "Hymns Ancient and Modern" have found it necessary to have a special section of "Hymns for the Young," but probably until the present time none ever thought how appropriate it would be to pray and praise as children and have sermons for children, on that day

which is so thoroughly their own—Innocents' Day—the day when King Herod, to compass the death of that Child whose birthday we keep at Christmas, slew the little children at Bethlehem.

Dean Stanley, who has done so much towards utilizing the great Abbey Church at Westminster, originated the truly happy idea of calling the London boys and girls together in that historic place on Innocents' Day. Despite a sloppy, rainy day, the Dean's invitation was readily responded to by old as well as young. The grown-up people mustered too strongly for it to be called a juvenile congregation; but still those for whom the service was specially designed were present in good force. Anticipating the spirit of those changes which are coming on our once rigid and inflexible ritual, Dean Stanley introduced special psalms and lessons—the former being Psalms viii., xv., and cxxvii.; the latter, 1 Samuel iii. and Luke ii. 40—52, all most appropriate to the occasion. The anthem was from Ecclesiastes xii. 1—13, by Professor Sir Wm. Sterndale Bennett, consisting of a duet for treble voices and full chorus, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth," &c. The service was intoned by Canon Troutbeck, and the lessons read by the Dean. Before the sermon, the hymn, "Jesu, meek and gentle!" was sung; after which the Dean ascended the pulpit, and preached a short but impressive

sermon from St. Luke ii. 40, "The child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom ; and the grace of God was upon Him."

By the time the sermon commenced evening had begun to fall, and the dim light of the few candles fell upon the upturned faces of little ones crowding the lectern and altar-steps in a most satisfactorily unorthodox manner ; whilst the two large tapers on the altar, and the two by the side thereof, were just enough to shed a "dim religious light" round the noble old sacrarium.

"Innocents' Day," said the Dean, "besides being an appropriate day on which to call boys and girls together, was historically famous in the annals of Westminster Abbey ; for it was on that day, eight hundred years ago, it was finished by King Edward the Confessor, himself an innocent, guileless man—in many respects like a child. It was with special reference to them as children that the various portions of Holy Scripture had been chosen for the service—the 8th Psalm, which showed how children might find out God in nature ; the 15th, teaching them to be humble, pure, and honourable ; the 127th, telling parents what gifts their children were to them. The anthem put before them 'the whole duty of man ;' the hymn showed how the very youngest might come to Christ. The First Lesson presented to them the child Samuel, waiting for God's voice ; and the Second gave them the great

example of Christ as a little child." In adopting this last as his text, Dean Stanley pointed out that Christ grew in character and goodness as well as in stature. Christ was taught "by father meek and mother mild." So must they advance. The world is moving, and we must move with it. God is continually calling us to higher spheres of duty. "You and I," said the preacher, "must advance." There were three noteworthy stages of Christ's education, each adding to His childish powers. 1. He "grew and waxed strong in spirit." "Boys," said the Dean, "honour the strong limb, the sturdy arm, and they do well; for these are God's gifts. They like the body that can endure blows, or win the race, or conquer in the game." All wished for this; but there was something else to be wished for—a stout heart to resist temptation, to scorn a lie, never to be betrayed into wrong-doing. They would be stronger and stronger every year—not stronger in body perhaps: that we cannot say—it depends on God—but we can say in character, mind, and spirit. The stout heart comes by trying to get it. 2. Next came wisdom. Christ imbibed wisdom from those around Him, and at the same time drank in that Heavenly wisdom which comes from the fountain and source of wisdom. So, too, you who are at school gain wisdom from books—from looking about you. You need not be old before your time; but recollect these golden days never come back. There was nothing

King Alfred regretted so much as the fact that his wandering life had prevented his having regular instruction in his youth. Try to gain wisdom by being teachable, humble, modest, and often cross-questioning yourselves, and God will give it to you. It was thus Christ, as a boy of twelve, gained it—by “hearing and asking questions.” 3. Lastly, there came “grace.” “The grace of God was upon Him;” or, as it is said, farther down in the chapter, “He increased . . . in favour with God and man.” Christ did what His parents told Him. He was kind and courteous, and all were glad to see Him. “So,” added the preacher, “do you look up to God as your Father, and on your companions and school-fellows as brothers. Especially do you, who are a little older, look on your younger companions as being put under your protection. Any unkindness done to a little companion, or brother or sister, is remembered by them years after you have forgotten it; whilst kindness from a stronger to a weaker boy is equally treasured up. Years part you, perhaps; but when you are quite old, some one presses your hand kindly, because you befriended him when you were boys together at school. When you say your prayers,” the Dean concluded, “remember you are speaking to a kind Friend. Grace cannot come to a hard heart; but on the childish heart it falls like rain upon the grass. So the grace of childhood grows to the grace of manhood, and the grace of

manhood to the grace of age, and all to the Grace of God. As this beautiful building is made up of small stones, each helping to build up the whole, so all the world is made up of the graces, not only of full-grown men and women, but also of children. Remember, children, this day. If you are tempted to be idle or rude, to do wrong, or to leave off saying your prayers, think of your Saviour's good example put before you to-day in Westminster Abbey."

As the last words of the Benediction fell on their ears, and the organ pealed forth the Hallelujah chorus, that mighty congregation—mighty in numbers though made up mostly of tiny atoms—passed out through the dim aisles and silent cloisters, more than one of the grown-up portion, it may be, impressed with the *genius loci*, as well as by the simple words just listened to, and thinking, mayhap, what mistakes in after-life might have been avoided had such been the fashion, in their golden age, of keeping Innocents' Day.

AT THE PRIMATE'S ORDINATION.

THERE is, in my opinion, no service which so distinctively shows the genius of the National Church as her form of ordination for priests and deacons. In this ceremony we can plainly trace that compromise which, whilst it is brought as an objection against her by enemies, is equally relied upon by friends as proving her comprehensiveness and catholicity. In the imposition of hands clear witness is borne to the doctrine of the Apostolical Succession, while, in soberness and solemnity of ritual, the ceremony is all that the most puritanically disposed could desire. It was because I looked upon it as such an index of the *via media* principle in the Establishment that I resolved to be present at the Archbishop of Canterbury's Ordination in the parish church of St. Mary, Lambeth.

By half-past ten o'clock I found myself pacing the beautiful Albert Embankment beneath the shadows of palatial St. Thomas's Hospital. The bells began to ring before I passed the red-brick portal of the archiepiscopal palace up to the quaint old country-looking church of St. Mary. There I found three deacons-elect waiting to get in at a side-door half-an-

hour before time. As I was looking about a vergers came up and asked me if I was a "candidate." I thought how many years ago it was since I could have owned that soft impeachment, and was half inclined to show him my grizzled locks and say, "Non sum qualis eram boni sub regno *Sumneri*," but I fancy he would not have understood me had I done so. I simply replied in a negative, and entered the church. There was a homeliness about the interior which quite kept up the rustic idea inspired outside. The congregation, which had already begun to muster, was purely a Lambeth one, strengthened evidently by a few friends of the candidates. There were numbers of old women, most of whom seemed to think they had a prescriptive right to occupy the seats reserved for the clergy and candidates in the chancel; and as they were nearly all very deaf, it was difficult for the vergers to remonstrate with them, and get them to occupy seats in the body of the church. At 10.45 a procession of charity girls came in with blue bonnets, yellow mittens, and queer little caps coming far forward, which made them look not only distressingly alike, but as if they all had bad heads. At eleven o'clock the rector and two curates entered from the vestry and went west to meet his Grace. True to his time, the Archbishop arrived with his Suffragan Bishop of Dover, four chaplains, and the preacher, Rev. R. Elwin, Vicar of Margate. The candidates then got into line, and a

procession was formed, preceded by a beadle with a ponderous mace, which it did one's heart good to look at; and so all passed to the chancel, the preacher mounting the pulpit, and commencing his sermon forthwith—an excellent arrangement, dispensing with the customary morning prayer. An ordination service is always long, and usually intolerable; and if the Archbishop of Canterbury cannot relax a rubric under such circumstances, I should like to know who can.

Taking as his text 1 Cor. xi. 1, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ," the preacher said the words rather meant, "Be ye imitators of me as I of Christ." He pointed out in close detail how St. Paul followed or imitated Christ. Not only here, but in all his epistles did he set forth this as the pattern to be aimed at by Christians—that they should be imitators of him and of the Lord; and so for all who, like him and Barnabas, were separated for the work of the ministry by the laying on of hands, there was, he said, no higher model of life than the combined human and divine life lived by the Apostle, who was made such by the will of God and the special revelation of Jesus Christ Himself. The whole tenor of his life, from his conversion to the very last, was a sincere following out of the question he had asked, "What shall I do?" To do the will of God was the one object of his life. To imitate Jesus Christ in the sacrifice of

self, and in seeking that which was lost, was the one desire of his heart. If we had no personal record of St. Paul beyond that one letter to the Corinthians we should have reason to thank God for the ideal of a faithful minister of Christ which it presented to us. There was a wondrous union of diverse qualities which made St. Paul fit for a work similar in some respects to that chosen by those who had selected the work of the ministry to-day. There were not wanting some who depreciated St. Paul for his personal defects and feebleness of argument; but if such existed—and Paul would be the first to confess their existence—they only increased our thankfulness as showing the closeness of similarity between his case and our own.

The preacher then passed on to consider some of the special anxieties and fears, as well as hopes, on which a Christian minister entered at the time of his ordination, and noticed how St. Paul, versed in all the Greek philosophy of the schools of Tarsus as well as the Rabbinical learning gained in Jerusalem at the feet of Gamaliel, still joyed above all else in the knowledge of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. He dwelt on the sacraments, but dwelt still more on personal holiness, and attributed any success, not to himself but to God.

After the sermon the candidates arranged themselves before the Archbishop, who was seated in front of the altar. As I studied their hoods, I

noticed all were academical graduates. The deacons *in posse* only wore surplice and hood; the impending priests wore also a stole, crossed over the shoulder like an officer's scarf. No one having answered the Archbishop's invitation to allege any "notable crime" against the candidates, the ceremony proceeded with the Litany, which was read by Bishop Parry, Suffragan of Dover, with its special clause for the newly ordained. After this a hymn, "Pour out Thy Spirit from above," was sung; the Ante-Communion Service, read by Bishop Parry; the Epistle, by an archiepiscopal chaplain; and the Gospel, by a blushing deacon, as a compliment to him for having passed the best examination; and then the actual ordination took place. Only the Archbishop laid his hands on the deacons; but seven other "priests" besides his Grace did so in the case of the two admitted to the priesthood. Just before this last ceremony occurred the most expressive feature of all. At the bidding of the Archbishop "silence" was kept "for a space," while the congregation secretly prayed for the newly ordained; and then the sweet strain of the "Veni Creator Spiritus" broke softly on the ear, admirably sung by the choir of school boys.

The whole service concluded with the Holy Communion, which commenced precisely at one; so that, by a little judicious excision, the whole ceremony was not longer than an ordinary morning

office. It was effective throughout, from its very simplicity, and I could not help being struck with the evident force with which it came home to the mind of a tiny charity-school child in front of me—a wee, pale-faced thing, whose position gave her only a full view of the base of the pulpit; yet she remained as quiet as a statue, and alas, almost as pale as one, from first to last. One would rather, of course, see an ordination in Westminster Abbey or St. Paul's; but, failing that, one would scarcely desire a more fitting locale than the historic church of St. Mary's, Lambeth.

EASTERTIDE IN THE CHURCHES.

AMONG the suggestions of natural religion none is more spontaneous than that which prompts man to mark by the events of objective Nature the changes and fluctuations of that nature which is within him. To the fertile imagination of the ancient Greek every event in the outer world was thus symbolical. When autumn waned the Vine-God was dying, and he revived with returning spring. The growth of the vine regulated the joys and sorrows of the Greek, as that of corn guided the festivals of the Jew. And so, too, perhaps in some as yet undiscovered proportion to the growth of civilization, the religious instinct of nations expresses itself gradually more and more in objective symbolism. Those who cannot appreciate the method are too apt to stigmatize it as superstition, while, perhaps, in another direction—say for instance, of allegorizing Scripture—they are quite as æsthetic themselves. To the dispassionate observer such tendencies in either direction are signs of vitality in the National Church. They may be disposed to run into excess sometimes—and what instinct of man's nature is not?—but they are, at least, an

index of life. It may safely be averred that never was the endeavour to express by outward symbolism the deep thoughts which lie far down in the hearts of Churchmen more apparent than at the present moment. The effort is not the spasmodic one of a single school of religious thought, but extends to all, even to those outlying bodies of Nonconformity which have hitherto stood rigidly aloof, as if in fear lest to note with more than ordinary regard to the time "when Jesus died for men" should savour of superstition and "Roman bondage." I noticed, during the period of Passion-tide, announcements of a performance of Mendelssohn's "Christus," in Paddington Chapel. The performance of the Passion music in Westminster Abbey, inaugurated a year or two ago, has now extended to St. Paul's, and in the former church we have had two large palm branches surmounting the High Altar, in speaking remembrance of that memorable entry into Jerusalem eighteen hundred years ago. At St. Paul's, Lorrimore Square, Walworth, palm branches were given to the congregation; the office of Tenebræ was sung in churches of the Establishment, to commemorate the gradual extinction of the Light of the World; the Three Hours' Agony and the Stations of the Cross formed portions of "Protestant" worship—and why not? It were hard to say, except that these offices have been too long monopolized by

one section of the Catholic Church. But it is scarcely so much of these I now speak, though these are startling evidences of the turn religious thought is taking, as of the more general fact still that Easter decorations follow upon Holy Week observances in many and many a church in the metropolis which, only a year or two ago, would have thought such an alternation "High." It is this widespread contrast of the gloom of Passiontide with the glories of Easter that makes the movement in the direction of external symbolism so evident. If the beaded holly at Christmastide be, as it is universally held, so fit an emblem of the birth of Him who came into this world to suffer and die, surely the budding flowers of spring are no less speaking an endorsement of the great truth it was his mission to reveal, that so-called death is truest life. "See," said the witty canon of St. Paul's, in his last illness, as he pointed to a crocus just emerging from the ground, "the Resurrection of the World!" In such a spirit, I proposed taking my accustomed round among the London churches when Passiontide was speeding on to Easter, and noting, in high and low, how the transition is being marked. I avoid studiously, or mention only in passing, the best known of these, choosing rather to read any signs of the times in quiet byways, where the effort is less apparent, and therefore more spontaneous and instinctive.

As a representative of the Church of England "pure and simple," without tendency to either extreme, I resolved again to take St. Peter's, Kensington Park, the vicar of which, the Rev. John Robbins, D.D., an able and attractive preacher, combines breadth of doctrine with chastened beauty of ritual. The services at St. Peter's had been frequent and well attended during Lent and Passion-tide, and Easter Eve was literally the day of preparation. On Easter Sunday the church, whose architectural adornments are rich, was to be tastefully rather than profusely decorated. The chancel screen would be covered with white and red flowers, and a floral bank on the shelf behind the altar was to consist of the symbol I.H.S. in red azaleas on a ground of white azaleas and camellias. The gas standards were to be wreathed, and the deep sills of the windows filled in with flowers upon beds of moss. Already the fair fingers of lady decorators were busy with these adornments, for at St. Peter's volunteer work is readily given. Even the choir is now composed entirely of amateurs; though the services are very much above par. From Kensington Park I skirted the great metropolis to Kilburn Park, where, amid labyrinths of unfinished streets, green patches still remain, and were on Good Friday morning devoted to cricket, rounders, and Aunt Sally, by the non-churchgoers. St. Augustine's, Kilburn, is beginning to take its position among the

most advanced of the metropolitan churches. An iron building has represented it for several years; but the permanent chancel is now built, and its proportions are as fine as those of any church in London. The altar was draped in black as I entered, with a large screen of the same sombre tint behind, and on it were only a large cross, apparently of bronze, and two large candlesticks. The coloured windows in the chancel, which have been presented by a member of the congregation, and cost 1000*l.*, were covered up with screens, which were to be removed on Easter Sunday, when the church would also be decorated; though the fact of some portion of the old iron building being still used as a nave prevents much being done except at the east end. While I was examining the preparations in one of the vestries, the choir entered the chancel, habited only in black cassocks; and the Rev. E. Churton, of St. Mary, Magdalene, Paddington, commenced a series of addresses on the Seven Words from the Cross, which, interspersed with hymns, were to continue from twelve until three o'clock. In the vestry I saw lying a book containing the names of intending communicants on Easter Sunday. No less than five hundred were expected, so that St. Augustine's must have many sympathizers in this portion of suburban London. A file of little girls in quaint scarlet cloaks with hoods, attended by a Sister, came into the church as I was leaving. These, the female verger

told me, were "fondlings"—I presume she meant foundlings. The congregation was not large, but very devout; and the incumbent, the Rev. R. C. Kirkpatrick, a long-bearded priest, passed up the centre in long cassock and tippet as though they were his normal costume.

From St. Augustine's I sped to St. Cyprian's, Park Street, Dorset Square, the incumbent whereof, the Rev. "Father" Gutch, from All Saints', Margaret Street, had, like a true colonist, carried thither much of the genuine fire from his old home. It is a most unlikely-looking place, the front of an ordinary dwelling house being painted in severe ecclesiastical characters "S. Cyprian's Mission Church." I could not, by the way, help noticing to how large an extent ecclesiastical or mediæval saints are taking the place of those of the Gospel as patrons of ritualistic churches. Opening a door, I found myself on the very legs of the congregation; for the little place was quite full, and it was so dark that I walked unwittingly over my prostrate fellow-creatures. There was no service going on, since, by some eccentricity of calculation, the Three Hours' Agony was not to commence until one o'clock at this church. I was also surprised to see posted on the outer door an exhortation to Good Friday Communion, which is quite exceptional in "High" churches. It was definitely stated in this notice that the Holy Communion was not so much a mere

oblation as strictly a communion in the literal sense of the words. The altar, I found when I could see, was nearly bare, the large candlesticks being removed, the candles taken from the smaller ones, and the cross veiled. The "Reproaches" had been sung at half-past ten. The decorations for Easter would be confined to the chancel, with pots of growing flowers at the altar; and the first celebration on Sunday would be a full one at six o'clock, when large numbers were expected. At St. Mary Magdalene's, Paddington, I found the new roof on in place of the one recently destroyed by fire. It was elaborately painted, and the spire is already begun. The incumbent, the Rev. Richard Temple West, was preaching 'the Three Hours' Agony to a vast congregation, the majority being ladies. Here, too, I also found a memorial window dedicated to St. Swithin. Our hagiology is indeed expanding! The office, of course, is a facsimile of that used in the Church of Rome; but it is exceedingly appropriate, and was devoutly responded to by the large assembly, most of whom were dressed in deep mourning. Several members of religious societies, male and female, were present, and gave a picturesque appearance to the congregation; two, especially, belonging to some brotherhood, had on long coarse garments, exactly resembling Ulster coats, girt in at the waist with a leathern strap and steel ring. The mere average Churchman is utterly bewildered at all

these arrangements, and the congregation were so immersed in their devotions that it would have been actual sacrilege to disturb them. Certainly the Ritualist has the power of the Oriental himself for losing himself or herself in religious contemplation. The decorations in this church are usually rich in the extreme, as the congregation is, if not one of the richest, certainly one of the most liberal in London, and the influence possessed by the incumbent and his large staff of clergy is very marked.

The old Court suburb of Kensington used to be considered the very focus of High-and-dry-Church principles; but since the advent of Mr. Haines to St. Matthias', Earl's Court, a change has come over the spirit of its dream, and now the Rev. Father Walker has come up from St. Alban's, and added another mediæval name to the list of its patron saints by opening a church dedicated to the Hibernian St. Patrick. Father Walker used to conduct the band at St. Alban's on high days and holydays, standing in full canonicals in the centre of the chancel; and it is said that orchestral accompaniments will be the rule at St. Patrick's, Kensington. At St. Matthias' the services had been: Matins at half-past nine, the Reproaches at ten, and at half-past ten "The Way of the Cross along the Via Dolorosa, with the Stations," the "Three Hours' Agony" from twelve to three, by Rev. E. H. Platt, who was then engaged in preaching, to be followed

by Evensong and "Tenebræ" in the evening. At St. Patrick's there were only the usual Church of England services on Good Friday; but notice was given that at the High Celebration the music would be sung by a choir from the Royal Academy, the mass being Mozart's No. 3, in F, and the preacher the Rev. Father Stanton, of St. Alban's. Significant notices were also posted in St. Matthias' as to the hours when confessions would be heard, and that a fee of ten guineas would be charged for marriages in Lent. St. Philip's, Kensington, is always most tastefully decorated; a large staff of workers giving their time and attention to the work. At Christmas the whole church is richly adorned, but at Easter only the chancel, altar, prayer-desk, lectern, and pulpit, and, at the west end, the font, which is always a prominent object. The chosen flowers for Easter are white and red, richest exotics being tastefully blended with simple primroses. Pimlico is almost the traditional home of æsthetic worship; but even Belgravia itself is catching the contagion, and at St. Peter's, Eaton Square (who would have believed it twenty years ago?), crowds gather every Sunday to hear the eloquent sermons of the Rev. Mr. Wilkinson, and the Eastertide decorations were very rich indeed. Time, space, and my previous resolution prevent my doing more than allude in passing to those always attractive churches, St. Andrew's, Wells Street, and St. Alban's, Holborn. A long

double line of carriages, filling the little side street where the former stands, bore witness to the crowds who had assembled to hear the Rev. Berdmore Compton, rector of St. Paul's, preach at the four o'clock service ; whilst at the latter, perhaps, a more imposing arrangement for a penitential service was never seen than that of the splendid church in Brook Street, Holborn.

So ended my Good Friday's ramble among the London churches. Without being gifted with the powers of Lesage's demon, it would be impossible for one man to chronicle a tithe of the London churches ; but I fancy my excerpts may fairly be taken as illustrative. The gloom of Passiontide was at its very zenith around me ; and it was only by a forcible prolepsis I could discern the gleams of glory beyond. But certainly, as far as my prophetic power availed me, it may safely be said that the morrow's Easter Festival would be an exceptionally solemn one in our London churches.

CHRISTMAS DAY IN THE CHURCHES.

EDWARD IRVING, in one of the most striking of his sermons, defined nature etymologically as that which is "*natura*, about to be born." He made the present the germ or embryo of the future; and that was the idea which at the Christmastide of which I write seemed uppermost in the minds of those who strove, in the decorations of their churches, to represent symbolically the great event of the Nativity. The previous Sunday was, in different degrees, a "day of preparation." Of all the London Churches which were unorthodox enough to have their decorations up during the whole of the vigil, the most tastefully as well as elaborately adorned was St. George's, Campden Hill. Legends, scrolls, and devices occupied every coign of vantage; and the pulpit, font, and lectern were perfect gems of floral decoration. The pulpit was very striking, having a text round the top in white letters on a scarlet ground, the letters being composed of cotton wool, which has the effect of marble when viewed at a distance. In the centre panel was the monogram "I.H.S.," and in the side panels

the Latin Cross and Star of Bethlehem in frosted letters on scarlet ground. The chancel was almost entirely decorated by means of ivy leaves frosted with crystals of alum—perhaps a little over-frosted, but presenting an appearance quite unique. Under the east window was a gorgeous legend, in red letters on gold ground, “There shall come a Star out of Jacob,” whilst a cross of white camellias, with pots of flowers on each side, stood on the super-altar. The stone wall dividing the chancel from the body of the church was adorned with flowers and ferns, and over the font was a conical covering decked with white flowers, and surmounted by a magnificent arum. The reading desk and lectern were wreathed with holly, red berries, and *immortelles*. In no church which I visited was so striking a *tout ensemble* produced, the only mistake being the multiplication of what surely ought to be a single emblem only—the cross.

All Saints', Kensington Park, was beautifully but not profusely decorated—the fald-stool and font especially so. This latter was embellished with a new and handsome ewer, the gift of a member of the congregation. The morning preacher on Christmas Eve was the vicar, the Rev. John Light, who also occupied the pulpit at the late service and on Christmas morning. His sermon was an eloquent one, quite extempore, from St. Matthew viii. 7, the

subject being Christ the healer and restorer of men. The preacher treated at some length the subject of prayer as a constraining cause of Divine interference in human affairs; and instanced the case of the restoration of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales as an evidence of the effect of national prayer offered on his behalf. The services were hearty and earnest, and attended by vast congregations; processional and recessional hymns being used at those of Christmas Day; whilst at the late service on Sunday was sung Gounod's anthem, "Bethlehem," and at the morning service of Christmas Day Handel's "There were shepherds."

From the well-known character of Dr. Lee as an authority on matters of ritual, the decorations of All Saints', Lambeth, are always looked forward to with more than usual interest by those who care to study the development of ritual in the Church of England. At this church the altar was vested in a frontal of yellow satin, so arranged that the handsome materials of which the altar is composed are neither hidden nor ill-contrasted. On either side of the jewelled cross were six large vases of white camellias. The pulpit, standards, lectern, and ambones were decorated with holly, ivy, ferns, dried grasses, and flowers. Inside the coronæ, suspended over the sanctuary floor, hung large clusters of evergreens, surrounded with wax tapers.

The screen, effectively but neatly decorated, was bright with 150 tapers, placed thicker round the figure of Christ on the Cross. The antiphon-lectern, flanked, like the altar, with tall wax candles, was likewise entwined with holly, ivy, and box. Around the sanctuary hung eight banners of scarlet and white, charged alternately with St. George's and St. Andrew's crosses. The pictures of the Crucifixion and St. Swithin, patron of the diocese, were also wreathed with holly.

At half-past ten o'clock on Sunday night, the "first evensong of Christmas" was chanted by the vicar, preceded by a procession round the church, with cross, lights, banners, and hymns. Evensong was followed by a celebration of the Midnight Eucharist, choral throughout. Dr. Lee, assisted by the other clergy and officials of the church, officiated and preached from the text, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem." The music was the Gregorian "*Missa quinti toni*." The choir, which is one of the largest of our London parish churches, was quite full, no less than sixty persons taking their appointed places in it. The midnight service was brought to a close by a procession round the church. On Christmas Day there were three celebrations of the Holy Communion. The services were choral, and on a truly festival scale.

The chief impression left on my mind by my

lengthened ecclesiastical peregrination on Christmas Eve was the amount of church-going power, so to say, evidenced in the throngs that flocked to the different places of worship. At half-past ten on Christmas morn the street outside St. Andrew's, Wells Street, was blocked by a crowd assembled for a quarter-past eleven service; and, as soon as the doors were opened, every nook and cranny was filled. There had been already three celebrations, at seven, eight, and a quarter-past nine. The church was not much decorated, except in the chancel, where camellias were blooming in profusion. Gounod's beautiful composition "Cradled all lowly," was again used as an introit; and the anthem was Dr. Stainer's "The Morning Stars sang together." The same remarks apply to All Saints', Margaret Street, where at eleven o'clock there was barely standing room. Here the decorations appeared to be entirely confined to the Sacrament. Passing on to St. Mary Magdalene's, Munster Square—for I still preserved my character of a peripatetic philosopher—I found the Rev. E. Stuart officiating at "Mass," surrounded by a large number of assistants gorgeous with red cassocks and rich vestments. The church, which was sumptuously adorned in every part, was filled with clouds of incense as I entered; and the choir was just singing Marbecke's massive Credo. Here I waited for the sermon,

which was preached by the incumbent from 1 St. John iv. 3: "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

The last on my list for the morning of Christmas Day was St. Alban's, Holborn. There I found the sermon by "Father" Russell just concluded. "Father" Wellington was acting as celebrant; and "Father" Walker wielding the bâton to a full band and choir, who were performing Mozart's beautiful First Mass. The vestments and decorations were of the richest possible description; but here again, as in all the most advanced churches, the ornamentation was exclusively confined to the Sacrarium. There was an immense congregation, and a large section of them were poor people. It is customary to say that the poor do not understand or appreciate these "High" services. I can only say there were plenty of ragged coats at the back of St. Alban's at High Mass on Christmas Day whose occupants followed diligently and devoutly every word of the service. One such presented me almost patronizingly with what I thought was simply a Prayer-book. When I returned it to him, he said, "I thought perhaps you would like a *Vade Mecum*!" Poor fellow, he had compassion on my possibly too apparent Protestantism!

Of the remaining churches in the suburbs, it is only necessary to remark that St. Barnabas, Pimlico, and its Mission Church, were decorated richly, as on former occasions. St. Stephen's, Shepherd's Bush, was still distinctive in having its green legend *outside* the porch: "He shall save His people from their sins;" whilst St. Gabriel's, Pimlico, and St. Michael's, Chester Square, were rich in banners and decorations. At St. Mary Magdalene's, Paddington, the service was more Gregorian than strikes one as quite adapted to a great festival; but the "*Adeste Fideles*" and "*Hark, the herald angels!*" were sung heartily. The vestments were, as usual, white, the celebrant only wearing a red cross at the back. The decorations, again, were confined to the chancel and font. There was no special Christmas Eve service, owing to its being Sunday, and the celebrations of the Holy Communion on Christmas Day commencing as early as 5 A.M.; but the usual seven o'clock Sunday evensong was made the festival service for the Eve, when the church was crammed, and numbers could not gain admission. On Christmas Day the celebrations were plain at 5, 6, 7, and 8.30, and choral at 11.45 A.M.; procession previous to the latter hymn, "*Adeste Fideles*;" recession, "*Nunc Dimittis*;" matins (choral), at 10.30 A.M., and evensong at 4 P.M.; at which last service there was again the procession hymn, "*Adeste Fideles*," and reces-

sion hymn, 320 (A. and M.). At matins, and at 11.45 the church was again crowded in every part. The number of communicants on Christmas Day exceeded that of the previous year, and amounted in all to 728, of which 64 communicated at 5 A.M., 108 at 6, 290 at 7, 134 at 8.30, and 132 at 11.45. The offertories on the Eve and Christmas Day amounted in all to 922*l.* 7*s.* 2*d.*, of which 532*l.* 7*s.* 2*d.* went towards an instalment of the debt on the existing building and interest due at Christmas (584*l.*), and the remainder towards the permanent roof, clere-story, and west window, which were to be commenced at an early date. The services partook of the usual heartiness for which this church is celebrated. Probably none can read these facts without feeling that "there's life in the old Church yet!" Few churches have evening service on Christmas Day, that evening is supposed to be devoted to social festivity; but Mr. Haines, of St. Matthias, Kensington, lighted on a happy idea when he originated a Christmas evening service for the solitary, at 7.30 P.M. It was simple in the extreme—there were only four men and two boys in the choir—but it was very hearty. The sermon that followed it was most appropriate. It was in substance an account of Bethlehem and its associations; but there were in it many passages that bore direct reference to our peculiar gathering. Prayers for the dead were

strongly advocated. "There are no dead," the preacher said ; " witness the vacant chairs you leave for them at Christmas." An anticipation of the time when "miserable divisions shall be done away, when Roman Catholics, Greek Church, Anglicans, and Dissenters shall be all one," concluded a most exceptional sermon, and an equally exceptional "Christmas Day in the Churches."

THE BATTLE OF CONVOCATION.

THERE was fought out, in the theatre at Oxford, what is destined, perhaps, to be the most important conflict in which the Broad Church party has yet engaged, on the occasion of Dean Stanley's appointment as Select Preacher. Hitherto they have tried their strength against the Evangelical and Ritualistic bodies in detail ; but, on the occasion of which I write, these two formidable opponents were massed against them. For some days past angry words had been bandied between the contending forces, and the preparations showed that the contest was to be more than a verbal one. From an early hour the station at Paddington gave one the idea of a sort of academical Derby day. By ten o'clock the platform was crowded with unmistakable M.A.'s, with here and there a dignitary of the Church or higher graduate. The Establishment was represented in its every phase of thought. Here was a smooth-shaven Ritualist in cassock corded round the waist, priest's cloak, and clerical wideawake ; here an Evangelical clergyman, in voluminous white necktie ; and here, again, a Broad Churchman, who, with a more or less correct clerical attire, combined the

hirsute appendage of a Barbarossa, and other symptoms of the muscular Christian. Lawyers had impressed their brief bags into service for carrying their cap, gown, and hood; while young M.A.'s, whom one knew about town, swaggered into smoking carriages, with the audibly announced intention of "giving Stanley a lift." Friend and foe faced each other in the narrow confines of a railway carriage, scarcely daring to utter a word either to the other, lest they should betray their tactics to the enemy. I can conscientiously say that the half-dozen men who filled my compartment never spoke to one another beyond the ordinary civility of passing the morning papers; and it was only by the titles of their journals I could guess the proclivities of my fellow-travellers. So we sped along the swollen Thames, and over the long backs of the Berkshire Downs, to the fair University city. At Reading we took in a large contingent of bucolic parsons, each of whom, as he sought to find a place in an already crowded train, bustled anxiously up and down as though he thought the whole Church Militant was in danger if his single vote should fail to be recorded.

Oxford was fairly startled from the serenity which usually marks the fag-end of Michaelmas Term by this sudden irruption of the outer world. Recognitions took place at every street corner; the hotels were put upon their mettle; the porters' lodges of colleges were besieged; and Boffin's Refreshment

Rooms ran over with hungry curates from the country. As an evidence of the interest the question of Dean Stanley's appointment excited beyond the walls of the University, I may mention that even the guards and porters at the railway holloood to each other to know what "was the state of the betting;" but even they did not seem quite to have calculated on the matter being so warmly taken up in London and by the country at large. At half-past one o'clock the bell of St. Mary's gave notice to the combatants to prepare for the fray, and immediately the floor of the theatre was sprinkled with a few representative men of all the schools. The non-residents appeared in gowns of various degrees of rustiness, with chimney-pot hats, and now and then a wideawake. These early comers conversed in small groups, hugging instinctively those sides of the building on which were written respectively "placet" or "non-placet," giving thereby an inkling of how they meant to vote. The gathering increased every moment, and soon the Doctors in their scarlet and black began to dot the seats around the Vice-Chancellor's chair. Prince Leopold, by right of his royalty, entered the sacred enclosure with Dr. Acland, and afterwards took his seat among the Doctors. Before two o'clock every inch of the floor was full, the occupants standing in anticipation of the coming encounter. Still they gravitated towards their respective voting doors; and on the "placet" side one descried the scholarly

face of Professor Jowitt, the sharply-cut features of the Rev. Mark Pattison, and the well-known physiognomy of Professor Max Müller ; while on the opposite side Mr. Burgon was marshalling his forces, and Dean Goulburn, from the Doctor's benches, looked out over the seething mass of M.A.'s below him. At two o'clock, or a little after, the Vice-Chancellor arrived, and forthwith commenced proceedings in Latin, which must have been exceedingly edifying to the ladies, who, in some numbers, occupied the Strangers' Gallery, backed by a narrow fringe of undergraduates. The object of the Convocation was stated as being the appointment of Select Preachers, and the names were then submitted to the doctors and masters for approval. "*Placetne igitur vobis huic nomini assentire ?*" being the form in which the question was proposed. The name first on the list was that of the Rev. Harvey Goodwin ; and a faint buzz in the Assembly was interpreted by the Vice-Chancellor, habituated to such sounds, as an expression of approval. Thereupon he passed on to name number two, which, with some agitation, but with clear, resonant voice, nevertheless, he read out as "Arthur Penrhyn Stanley." Immediately there ensued a scene of the wildest confusion. On the Placet side cheers and waving of trencher caps ; on the Non-placet side feeble hisses ; and from all sides, undergraduate as well as graduate, mingled shouts of "Placet" and "Non," with cheer and hiss

à discrétion; until the ringing voice of Dean Liddell breathed peace over the troubled waters by pronouncing the magic words, "Fiat scrutinium!" Thereupon the two proctors proceeded first of all to take the votes of the doctors on their benches, and when this was done they took their station at the doors labelled "Placet" and "Non-placet," the Vice-Chancellor directing the voters thus: "Vos quibus placet hoc propositum per fores ad dextram discedatis; vos quibus non placet per fores ad sinistram." During the process of polling, which was brief considering the numbers, one had an opportunity of criticising the constituents of that truly exceptional gathering. It was certainly not true to say, as some did say, that only the younger Masters voted for Dean Stanley. There was quite a fair proportion of white and bald heads on the "Placet" side. The country contingent was not so numerous as one had expected, and I do not believe that all of these went out at the left-hand door. Evidently, however, parties were pretty evenly balanced; and when the Non-placets had all recorded their decision, there were about twenty-five left on Dean Stanley's side, which probably would have nearly represented the actual majority, but at the last moment some stragglers, who had only arrived in Oxford by the 2.25 train, hurried in, and so swelled the numbers. One late-comer arrived without his academics, and some zealous supporter of the Dean had to denude

himself and pass his cap and gown outside to enable this gentleman to vote. By-and-by it was over. The proctors presented their lists to the Vice-Chancellor, who, amid breathless silence, pronounced the words, "*Majori parti placet!*" Then there was indeed a cheer, which rang through the building from basement to upper gallery, and was taken up outside in a way that reminded one of the Trial of the Bishops. The hisses, if there were any, were fairly drowned. Oxford had given its approval to Dean Stanley. The Prince, who had continued during the whole of the proceedings in conversation with Doctor Hawkins, the venerable Provost of Oriel, now left the theatre, as did the Vice-Chancellors, Doctors, and Masters, and in a short time it was as empty as though no Battle of the Creeds had been lost and won there. The names of the other three Select Preachers were quite inaudible, but evidently approved. On leaving the theatre I ascertained that the majority in favour of Dean Stanley's appointment was 62; the numbers voting being—Placet, 349; Non-placet, 287. Over 600 members, therefore—something like a full House of Commons—recorded their votes on this memorable occasion.

On the up platform, for the 4.10 train, gathered once more the high and the low, returning to their cures in town and country, crestfallen, sadder, and, we will hope, wiser men than when they set out in the morning, bent on stamping out independent

thought and scholarship, as if alien ingredients in the National Church of England in the nineteenth century. I had the felicity of announcing the majority to the inquisitive guards and porters, whose interest told plainly that this question has a relevancy far beyond the walls of the University. One and all were "glad to hear Stanley was in."

As we sped along through the flooded fields and amid the shimmering moonlight, one eminently Conservative old gentleman—for whom the times, like the up-express, were doubtless going a good deal too fast—expressed to me his decided opinion that non-resident members had no right to interfere in these matters. It ought to be purely a question for the University. Having delivered himself thus, he calmly fell asleep, in blissful unconsciousness of his own illogical position, seeing he had journeyed down from the metropolis that morning and back again in the evening, on the fruitless errand of opposing Dean Stanley.

AN EAST-END MIDNIGHT MEETING.

THAT man essays a difficult task who would write of London's ugliest vice without calling up a blush to the cheek of virtue and innocence—who would let decent English maids and matrons read the story of their "erring sisters' shame" without pandering to a depraved curiosity or a vulgar appetite for horrors. Let none who seek such prurient details be at the pains to run their eye down these pages; nor, at the same time, let those who dread to hear of the special sin of great cities veil them from the sight even of the purest and most blessedly ignorant in the household. Let each be well assured that, while a plain, unvarnished statement of things heard and seen is given, much must of necessity be suppressed. The whole of the stern, sad truth cannot be told, but from what *is* told, let those who read guess what might be revealed were no such wholesome restraint enforced. Neither, again, is it of West-end vice—painted, enamelled, almost refined—that we would now speak. No Laïs or Aspasia is the model at present. No Formosa lures us to scenes of gilded vice. It is vice with the paint off, or so clumsily patched as to heighten its deformity, that we are to see. Here is

the programme: "Midnight Meeting Movement.—Admit to St. Matthew's Schoolroom, Princes Square, St. George's Street, E., at eleven o'clock;" whilst a written addendum states that "this meeting is among the sailors' girls of Ratcliff Highway, a distinct class of the fallen." Fallen, and in Ratcliff Highway! That announcement, coupled with the assurance that every unpleasant detail shall be delicately veiled, will surely be enough to scare all but genuine good Samaritans from the too true story.

On leaving the silent city behind to go eastward at night, I have a feeling as though I had passed beyond the haunts of civilization into some desert. Nor is the idea quite hyperbolic; for that district lying along the Thames east of London Bridge is a country in itself, and towards midnight it has many of the unattractive aspects of a wilderness. Along Thames Street, so busy by daytime, you hear the echo of your own footsteps. Pass the postern gate of the Tower, and you are in the sailors' *quartier*; on into Ratcliff Highway—euphemistically termed St. George's Street—where, amid frequent public-houses and dancing-rooms, low vice keeps perpetual saturnalia. Leaving for a moment this noisy thoroughfare, I find myself in one of those queer, quiet nooks so numerous in London, Princes Square, with the little Swedish church in the centre, looking picturesque in the moonlight. Among other buildings is St. Matthew's Schoolroom. I enter, and find

the clergyman and a couple of the society's officials. The company have not yet arrived, though ample preparations are being made for a large number in the shape of a comfortable tea. It is proposed that we should pass the time before the hour of assembling in visiting the public-houses of Ratcliff Highway; and, in charge of a gentleman who has the *entrée*, I sally forth. If you look narrowly into each low gin-shop, you will find that it has a long room at the back, with tables running round, the centre being left open for dancing, and the end occupied by a small stage. In the first we enter a man is singing a comic song to a small audience; or rather the audience and he are singing it together, and the young ladies of the company, in a sort of ballet attire, with a tendency to scarlet boots, are mingling freely with the audience. A word with the smart barmaid as to whether she has read the last book he left, and my guide marshals me into the dancing room, the manager of which, attired as a clown, is lounging in the doorway. The wonderful thing is the excellent footing on which my friend, who is a City Missionary, stands with the publicans, diametrically opposed as their callings seem. He shakes hands with all the girls, calls them "lassies," and scatters his invitations broadcast among them. They are largely accepted too. There is an utter difference, he tells me, between these sailors' girls and the soldiers' girls of

contiguous quarters. They hold no communication with one another. These girls have a distinctive attire. They go bareheaded, greatly leaning to ornaments in their hair; they wear low dresses and a shawl cast about them to look like an opera cloak. On many a breast I saw—strange to say—a large cross! As we passed one dismal lane leading out of the main thoroughfare, my guide asked me to come down. "This is Gravel Lane," he said; "at the bottom is the Dock bridge, where so many of these poor girls throw themselves over. It has been found necessary in consequence to keep a policeman there from seven in the evening all night. I call it the 'Bridge of Sighs,'" he added. We went down; and, sure enough, there was the policeman at his gloomy vigil. It was a quiet nook, with the bows of two big ships looming over the moonlit water. "They find it very convenient," said the Missionary, with a touch of grim humour, "to come down here and drop into the water." But it was time to get back to the schoolroom. When we did so, we found somewhere about eighty girls assembled, sitting on the school forms, and taking tea with evident gusto. There was some little noise of course—where did ever fourscore females of any class gather *without* noise over the cup that cheers?—but still all was orderly and decorous, so far. From the brazen-face harridan who had been "out" for long years (such is the technical term), to the girl of fifteen,

whose "outing" numbered only weeks—there they were, human wrecks, body and soul, stranded on the cruel shoals of society, and only beginning to be recognised as material for the social reformer to work upon. Some half-dozen gentlemen connected with the Midnight Meeting Society, and two or three Bible-women, were waiting on these strange guests; and the clergyman, a youngish man, with quite white hair and a silvery voice, was going up and down the ranks, making cheery remarks, and ministering to appetites that were by no means delicate. I ingratiated myself by taking round that highly popular condiment, the plumcake; and whilst I did so, not one indecent or even discourteous word was spoken, no indelicate act or look met my eye amongst those fourscore of the very offscouring of Ratcliff Highway. "It is astonishing what relics of humanity one finds here," said the clergyman.

With instinctive horror naturally experienced for what is new or strange, I felt myself shrinking from these poor girls in the dancing-room, whilst my merry Missionary shook each one by the hand and greeted her with his "Well, lassie!" But when brought face to face with them, I was utterly ashamed of such a feeling, and wondered why people should shake them off roughly or give them hard speeches, instead of imitating the good Missionary's efforts to say a word that shall save them. One of the first girls to whom I spoke had just made the "great experiment" of a

leap from the Bridge of Sighs. She had been rescued from the water and taken to prison, where she was kept for seven days; and when I saw her she had only that morning come out of gaol. She had evidently been drinking during the day; and there was a fierce light in her eyes, as she kept saying, in answer to protests against her attempted suicide, and advice that she should try to right herself, "No, no; I am fallen too low—too low. I shall try London Bridge to-night." "Do you think she will?" I asked of one of the officials. "Likely enough," was the business-like reply. In a quarter of an hour I came round to her again, and she was roaring with laughter and "taking a sight" at a friend on a neighbouring bench. When tea was over a hymn was sung, and considerable giggling was caused by its being pitched so high that the key had to be changed. That was the great interruption—in fact, the only interruption—of the evening, the irrepressible proneness of the girls to giggle; but I fancy I have observed this proneness elsewhere than in the purlieus of Ratcliff Highway. For instance, to show how a casual word will lead these impetuous people astray—the clergyman read a portion of Scripture to them, and related the parable of the Ten Virgins. The title was received with a regular guffaw. His address, which was perhaps a little too scholarly, described the marriage ceremonies of the East, and the "ornament of grace" worn by the bride, at which the girls gig-

gled again, and quite lost the point of that allegory. They sang lustily, and many of them had melodious voices. A few could sing the hymns without book—relic of a decent childhood, not yet lost! One old stager, who prided herself on her vocal powers, managed to get an arm-chair all to herself, and sang really an excellent alto with the air of an Alboni. Another gentleman followed the clergyman, and took the invitation ticket above quoted as his text, repeating, over and over again, the question, "Have you got tickets for Heaven?" and receiving pointed, but *sotto voce* replies. Strangely enough, the noisiest and most troublesome section were not the sailors' girls, but some work-girls—sack-sewers—who kept to themselves, and did their best to disturb proceedings, leaving noisily so soon as they had disposed of a very heavy tea, and had a brief "lark" during the preliminary proceedings. There were several more hymns, and a brief address was given by the secretary of the society, who urged the girls to leave the bad life at once behind. They could, if they chose, go away from that room, and be taken in cabs to homes where they would be qualified to lead decent lives for the future, and eventually, out of a total of eighty-eight, four girls did so remain, and a good many others promised to come to the office in the morning. One fresh-looking country lass wanted to be sent home to attend her mother's funeral. Her father, who had

been a farmer, was in independent circumstances ; but the daughter was an outcast, though only six weeks " out " in Ratcliff Highway, and as comely and well-spoken a girl as one could wish to see. Decidedly the noisiest and most giggling of the whole four-score was, to my surprise, one of the four who remained ; but I was informed that those who thus remain are often disappointing cases. Either they act on impulse, which cools down before the morning ; or they will sometimes go to the Home because it is late, and they may be locked out of their lodgings ; or even they will go simply for the " lark " of having a ride in a cab. The ordeal of having to walk up from Ratcliff to the office in Red Lion Square in the morning is, as one can well understand, a much better test of sincerity. Two other interesting " cases " may be mentioned, each confirming the good clergyman's remark that relics of humanity exist even here. One girl lingered long and anxiously about the door ; and the cause, I was told, was that she had a little child, two years old, whom she wished to have cared for. Clinging to the old, vile life herself, she still sought, like Dives in the parable, that the one to whom Nature had bound her with such strong ties might not come to that place of torment. The second case was that of a middle-aged woman, on whose face, it perhaps sounds hard to say, Nature seemed to have graven the stigma of her calling. I had noticed her as one

of the few who shed tears when allusion was made to the fact that some of the girls probably had mothers who had cared for them and prayed over them, and might even now be watching them from the world beyond. "That woman," said my guide of the evening, "is a veritable missionary for me. She has been 'out' eleven years; and though she wont leave her bad life, she protects me from being insulted, and gets the younger girls to listen to me." As the girls passed out of the room, a card was presented to each with the following words: "Dear Friend—If you will call at the office of the Midnight Meeting Movement, 5, Red Lion Square, Holborn, W.C., any day, from Monday to Friday, between ten and four, and Saturday, between ten and twelve, advice will be given you, and, if possible, assistance for the future."

Such were some of the presentable particulars of the Midnight Meeting. They may serve a good purpose if they convince the most forlorn wanderer on the wild London streets that there is still such a word as "home" for her; that she need not say, in Hood's graphic words—

" Oh, it was pitiful,
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none."

Christian charity is not so rare as it was. There are among us those large-hearted ones who can pity the sinner, whilst they loathe her sin. If one such Sister

of Mercy—in the truest sense of the words—can learn from what we have now said a new mission and mode of doing good, another sphere of serving Him who did not disdain to work among the publicans and harlots, this brief record of the Midnight Meeting will not have been written in vain.

A BISHOP'S BURIAL.

SCARCELY could a more incongruous gathering be imagined than that of which I made one in the summer of 1873. For myself I went in the cold-blooded way of "business;" but, in this respect, I was almost alone in my glory—if glory indeed it were. We were going to bury the Bishop of Winchester, whose death had recently startled us out of our serenity, and made us ask, whose turn would come next?

Steaming along as we did by special train, through the balmy July morning towards the breezy Sussex downs, it might have been asked us, as of Wordsworth's "tender child," what could we know of death? Everything around seemed so exuberant in life that no thought of death obtruded itself. We might have been a large party, mainly clerical, running down to Brighton for a summer day's holiday under episcopal supervision. We were, however, Bishop Wilberforce's great funeral party. We were going to lay in the earth the mortal remains of one who—we could not help thinking of it—was that day week as full of life, fuller of animal spirits, than we at that moment.

The departure of the train from Victoria Station was marked by the heterogeneous appearance which always characterizes a gathering of the English clergy—for the occupants were mainly clerical. Now one saw a bishop, now a bronzed clergyman from the country—here a well-known London incumbent, and there a young curate. Some few assumed a square cap and cassock, but most were clad only in the “sober livery” of mourning. The train seemed quite full, and, punctually at the hour appointed, sped out of the station with its strange occupants. There was, as may well be imagined, but one topic of discourse on the journey. All spoke solemnly, but happily and kindly withal, of him to whom they had come to pay the last poor offices of respect that summer morning. At Petworth Station it appeared as if every vehicle in the neighbourhood had been impressed into the service for carrying us over the two miles that intervened between that place and our destination. The drive was a beautiful one; and, as we defiled from the road into the umbrageous glades of Lavington Park, where a long stretch opened across the meadows, our cavalcade showed in its true dimensions, and was a veritable funeral procession indeed. Anon we reached the house of mourning, and, passing the veiled windows, entered through the hall into the apartment where the body was lying. The coffin was covered with a rich velvet pall, on which lay the crosier of the

departed bishop, and the insignia of his order, but all surmounted by exquisite floral wreaths and several crosses of flowers, one of great size ; whilst on the top of all was a large black and white crucifix, another standard one being also placed near the head of the coffin. Silently we passed around the narrow bed where he was sleeping so calmly in the sunshine, and out again on to the crisp sward of the lawn, up the slopes of which we mounted to the tiny church hard by, whose tinkling bell warned us of the approaching ceremony. By noon the little building had been filled, so far as its humble space could afford accommodation for those who did not form the actual funeral party. Humble villagers sat side by side with clergy, all bearing on their faces signs of the deepest emotion, and looking wistfully at the bier within the rood screen on which the bishop's coffin was to rest. The altar was draped with violet, and had upon it three candles and two vases of white flowers, the pillars of the chancel screen being wreathed with lilies. The holy table was vested for communion, and the elements stood ready on a credence hard by.

Soon, then, we heard the words, "I am the Resurrection and the Life," resounding from the neighbouring lawn, to tell us that the mortal remains of the Bishop had set out on their last journey ; and the long, white-robed procession, having passed round the green sward, entered at the portal of the

little church. The choir of St. Mary Magdalene's, with the Rev. Richard Temple West, headed the *cortège*; then came one bearing the pastoral staff of the Bishop reversed; next the coffin, still covered with its floral adornments, and borne by eight men in white frocks. Close by came the members of the Bishop's family and other mourners, and then the long line of clergy and dignitaries, who completely filled the body of the church as they passed to their seats, when the burial service commenced. The funeral psalm was chanted to a Gregorian tune with harmonium accompaniment; and then was read Paul's wonderful treatise on the Resurrection, from 1 Cor. xv.—whose marvellous analogies had been that morning illustrated for us in the golden fields ripening for the harvest, and the summer woods only beginning to be dashed with autumnal tints.

At the conclusion of the lesson, Hymn 191 (Ancient and Modern) was sung—

“ Christ will gather in His own
To the place where He is gone,
Where their heart and treasure lie,
Where our life is hid on high.

“ Day by day the Voice saith ‘ Come,
Enter thine eternal home;’
Asking not if we can spare
This dear soul it summons there.”

Then followed the Ante-Communion Service, the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel for St. James's Day being used.

As the Offertory Hymn, the beautiful composition, "Who are these like stars appearing?" was sung, followed by that great gathering—

"Who are these like stars appearing,
These, before God's throne who stand?
Each a golden crown is wearing,
Who are all this glorious band?
Alleluia! hark they sing,
Praising loud their heavenly King.

These, the Almighty contemplating,
Did as priests before him stand,
Soul and body always waiting
Day and night at His command;
Now in God's most holy place
Blest they stand before His Face.—Amen."

not a heart there but thrilled at the appropriateness of many of the expressions, as also at the long and expressive pause in the Church Militant Prayer, where God's holy name was blessed for all who had departed this life in His faith and fear. Then came the celebration of the Communion, reminding one of the way in which the Primitive Church celebrated the anniversaries of their martyrs' departure, not as their death-days, but as their birthdays, by offering the Eucharist, or sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise. There was no element of sadness, though every element of solemnity, in the service. It was a service worthy to be held over a Christian Bishop for whom we dared not "sorrow even as others which have no hope."

When the Communion Service was ended, the

130th Psalm, or "De Profundis," was chanted while the body was being moved to the churchyard. Thither, to a most sequestered spot, proceeded that vast assemblage, the choristers surrounding the grave, and the rest forming a deep circle around. The coffin was now uncovered, and was seen to be a handsome oak one, with a simple inscription, over which again were laid the crosses and wreaths, while fresh garlands were thrown in by ladies. As the service progressed, the hymn, "Brief life is here our portion," was sung; and then came the solemn finale as, at the words, "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust," was heard that dull sound of the clods on the coffin-lid, so often taken to be the deathblow to hope. But in Bishop Wilberforce's case there seemed, as I have said, to be none of this hopeless element. In that most beautiful and peaceful churchyard that bright summer morning, with children sweetly singing round his grave, and scented flowers heaped upon his coffin, we left our good Bishop sleeping, and felt that the close of that life was a fitting sequel of what had gone before, the bright eventide of a life that had been bright and happy as well as useful throughout—dashed, indeed, with a few shadows at sundown and wetted with the dew of "some natural tears," but still the appropriate closing in of life's little day, the commencement, as all present felt, of one brighter still that should never know eventide, shadow, or tears; for

the former things had passed away, and there would be no night there whither he had gone before us. The last hymn, with which was concluded this truly happy ceremony, was very fitting. It ran thus —

“ O shepherd of the sheep,
High Priest of things to come,
Who didst in grace Thy servant keep,
And take him sweetly home ;

“ Chief of Thy faithful band,
He held himself the least ;
Though Thy dread keys were in his hand,
O everlasting Priest.

“ So, trusting in Thy might,
He won a fair renown ;
So, waxing valiant in the fight,
He trod the lion down.

“ Then rendered up to Thee
The charge Thy love had given,
And passed away Thy Face to see
Revealed in highest heaven.”

Before the company separated, it was proposed that some memorial of the late Bishop should be got up. The Bishop of Chichester presided at an extemporized meeting on the lawn of Lavington House, when it was stated that a monument would be raised on the spot where the accident happened, and a committee, including all the bishops of Great Britain and Ireland, was appointed to meet on the following Thursday, at the S. P. G. Rooms, at three o'clock, for the purpose of deciding on the memorial. Lord Granville and Mr. Gladstone were also to be

added to this committee. Some reference was made to the division of the diocese, and the foundation of a new diocese of Southwark as a fitting form for such memorial to take. Clapham was named as the seat of the diocese, but the proposal was not favourably received.

Among the many affecting incidents connected with the Bishop's funeral, none is more worthy of mention than the presence of an American clergyman from the diocese of Connecticut. He landed on Saturday last, and the only introduction he brought in England was to Bishop Wilberforce. Too late to present his credentials to the living prelate, he stood among the mourners around his grave. There was also in the procession a coloured clergyman, named Gordon, of the purest African type. Altogether there could have been scarcely fewer than two or three hundred clergy present; and the assemblage was a striking instance of the effect that can be produced by the simple ritual of the Church of England properly carried out. In fact, the beauty of the ceremonial consisted in its simplicity. There was every variety of opinion as to the proper vestments in which to attend a funeral. The large majority of the clergy were in surplice, hood, and stole; some few wore collegiate caps; one only—Dr. Monsell, of Guildford—a biretta; many wore wide-awakes more or less ecclesiastical, some tall hats, a very few black gowns; but all were evidently

possessed of one heart and one soul, and animated by a single desire to show respect to the memory of the deceased prelate. The special train returned from Petworth at five o'clock, dispersing that large funeral party over London about seven, and our principal topic of discussion as we went back—so strangely does life ever trench on death, and action supervene on anything like sentiment—was who will be the Bishop's successor; and to whom will the inevitable translation hold out a prize in the Church in the shape of the "vacant mitre?"

A CHILDREN'S SERVICE.

I CAN remember the time when a Church of England service was made positively repulsive to a child. My only wonder is, when I cast back my thoughts over the annals of my own childhood, that the experiences of that portion of my existence did not permanently disgust me with all the influences of so-called "religion." A wretched schoolboy with twenty minutes' walk between me and school, I was doomed to sit each morning of the weary year, and hear the Bible read through *seriatim*, a chapter each prayer time, as though there was some talismanic virtue in those arbitrary divisions, and—worse than that—all Browne's lengthy "Reflections" afterwards. How devoutly I used to wish Browne had died when he was a poor little scrub like myself, instead of living to punish me with his weak dilution of Bible-and-water. The household where I lived never emerged very early, and when it happened to be a long chapter in Chronicles, with lots of hard names over which the reader broke his shins, or the 119th Psalm, I passively resigned myself to the twofold misery of going without my breakfast and getting an "imposs" for being late ;

while, when the reading was over, and Thornton's Family Prayers were drawled through, I learnt my Horace repetition on my chair, or varied the proceedings by pulling the cook's cap off, and making her gurgle with suppressed laughter. The servants—especially one particular cook I can recall from the numbers of new faces we saw during the year—hated Browne as much as I did, and never used to call me to Family Prayers, but phrased her summons thus, "Now, then, come to Reflections."

But it was on Sunday my agony culminated. We had "Reflections" in the morning; then service at an Evangelical church; that is, we "sat under" Mr. So-and-so. The sitting was, in fact, the main portion of our attendance; for Mr. So-and-so preached for an hour and a quarter, and habitually raved himself blue-black in the face. It was expected of him, and he did his duty conscientiously, and died early. In the afternoon we had Catechism—Sacraments and all—which was simply "not understood" of me. I wonder we did not have the Thirty-nine Articles and the Athanasian Creed. Evening Service was a minor misery; it was shorter, and a weak curate was sometimes allowed to preach, though my people said there was nothing *feeding* in "poor" Mr. Such-and-such's "discourses." I was glad to get to bed, even with the prospect of the morning's "Reflections."

How different the service which it is the object

of this paper to describe! I will not name the particular church where it took place, because I have my doubts whether it was quite ship-shape, orthodox, legal, according to Act of Parliament and all that kind of thing; but it was very nice, and I would not for the world get the good people who organized it into trouble. Let us call the church St. Asterisk's, and the officiating clergyman Mr. Blank. It was an afternoon service, which is generally a soporiferous affair. The service is long, and we know it will all have to be gone over again under happier auspices in the evening. The choristers are sleepy and sing flat, and the organist deputizes; while fifty form a large congregation, including the sponsors for the subsequent baptisms. To-day, however, there was a large congregation, composed of small, not to say infinitesimal units. The front blocks of the centre aisle on both sides, some six or eight pews deep, were filled with school-children; the seat-holders having relinquished their vested interests *pro tem.* in favour of the juveniles. Poor little bantlings in faded bits of showy finery were in the chief seats of the synagogue, and the people in the gold rings and goodly apparel had voluntarily gone behind, or located themselves in the free seats. There were lots of children here too, more heavily costumed. They were, I grieve to say, talking undisguisedly, and altogether promised to be as fidgety a congregation as ever gathered

within the walls of a church ; but, as soon as the bell stopped, the organist, a lady volunteer, struck up some bright little symphony, and then enter the Rev. Mr. Blank, to lively music. He did not frown at the talking children, though his own surpliced choristers were as demure as mutes. There were no men ; they stood aloof from the afternoon service as inartistic and *infra dig.* After a very short silent prayer Mr. Blank gave out Hymn No. 361, Ancient and Modern, and there was no more talking. All the little ones sang it full-voiced, for it was one they knew in school. It commences thus—

“Once in royal David's city
 Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
 In a manger for His bed.
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.”

If in the days of my childhood I had heard a choir suddenly start that cheerful tune, I should have thought they had all turned “wicked,” or that I was asleep and dreaming it was a week-day. But it was very touching, actually *screamed* out as it was by most of the school-children. The choristers either smiled or looked scandalized, and some of the bigger ones remained mute, feeling their reputation at stake. When it was done, the clergyman sang the Litany, which had been omitted in the morning, the children making the responses very sweetly and correctly, and then there was another hymn, which

Mr. Blank had found, I fear, in some very unorthodox collection, and had a few copies struck off by the church-printer, himself teaching the air to the school-children and choristers. It was called "Only beginning the journey," and it struck me so much that I must print it. I devoutly hope I am infringing nobody's copyright. If I am, I apologize beforehand.

"Only beginning the journey,
Many a mile to go;
Little feet how they patter,
Wandering to and fro.
Trying again so bravely,
Laughing in baby glee;
Hiding its face in mother's lap,
Proud as a baby can be.
Only beginning, &c.

"Talking the oddest of language
Ever before was heard,
But mother—you'd hardly think so—
Understands every word.
Tottering now and falling,
Eyes are going to cry,
Kisses and plenty of love-words,
Willing again to try.
Only beginning, &c.

"Father of all, O guide them,
The pattering little feet,
While they are treading the uphill road,
Braving the dust and heat.
Aid them when they grow weary,
Keep them in pathways blest;
And, when the journey is ended,
Saviour, O give them rest.
Only beginning, &c."

When it was over I found myself rubbing my eyes—I suppose because it was so unlike an ordinary hymn—"From lowest depths of woe," "There is a fountain filled with blood," or anything of that kind—and I wanted to see if I was wide awake. I have a notion a good many mothers with their children, and one or two big bearded fathers were rubbing *their* eyes too. Mr. Blank, singing out lustily himself, seemed to float in a sort of mist up into the pulpit, and, before I could quite realize that he was not in an aquarium, he had commenced the touching collect for Innocents' Day. This, again, is worth transcribing—

"O Almighty God, who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast ordained strength, and madest infants to glorify Thee by their deaths: mortify and kill all vices in us, and so strengthen us by Thy grace that by the innocency of our lives, and constancy of our faith even unto death, we may glorify Thy Holy Name: through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*"

Now here, again, I had expected, "Prevent us, O Lord!"—how that word "prevent" used to perplex me as a child!—or, "Blessed Lord, who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning," &c. The idea of making the different parts of the service dovetail one into the other, or bear any sort of reference either to other, had never occurred to us then. The parson had "Prevent us" and "Blessed

Lord" pasted into his sermon-case, so why should he "fash" himself to hunt up new Collects ?

Hereupon ensued what I suppose must in courtesy be termed a sermon. I had dreaded a "catechizing," that awful process of extracting from unwilling juveniles information which has been carefully drilled into them during the previous week. But no ; we had this "address." To me it sounded more as though Mr. Blank was reading the Death of Little Nell or Paul Dombey than preaching a sermon. But the children certainly listened to him. The parents were the most attentive, though.

"Children," he said—without giving out the ghost of a text—"I want to ask you to listen while I read a part of one of the most beautiful chapters in the Bible ; the words of the Ecclesiastes or Wise Preacher—the last chapter of the Book that bears his name, and which along with the Proverbs of Solomon comes immediately after David's exquisite Psalms, just as our sermon follows our hymns. The chapter opens thus—

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, 'I have no pleasure in them;' while the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain."

What a description that is of childhood ; of the time of life through which you are passing, and which we, your parents and teachers and clergymen, have left so far behind, yet have not forgotten. As we

look back to the old happy days of home—our earliest homes—and childhood and youth, we feel, I daresay, more than you do, how truly the words of this golden-mouthed preacher describe them, as the time when the evil days had not come, nor the years when we should say—as some of us have learned to say—“I have no pleasure in them.” Though of course we had, and you have, little passing sorrows, yet they were only like the shadows that flit across the fields on a day of April or autumntide, and which appear sent there to make the sunshine more enjoyable. It seems now, at all events when we look back, as though it had been always Sunday then (I groaned as I thought what *my* Sundays had been, and how infinitely I preferred the Monday mornings), as though the days were always sunny and the nights moonlit or starry; and when the little showers of tears cleared away it was a long, long time before the clouds came down again. You see I am only putting into slightly different words what Ecclesiastes says about childhood; and I repeat it because I want to fix those words in your memories, and make you understand something at least of what a good thing God gives you in your childhood. You will not understand all about it until you get to look back upon it as we do. The writings of most poets are full of these recollections of home and childhood, and the contrast between early and later days in life. Some very plaintive ones, which I daresay many of

you recollect, come into my mind as I speak to you. They were written by one who, amidst much pain and trial and sorrow, still made his life and the lives of those around him bright and cheerful and happy—

“ I remember, I remember,
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn ;
He never came a whit too soon,
Or brought too long a day,
But now I often wish the night,
Had borne my breath away.”

And he concludes by some words which sound sadder than they really are—

“ Now 'tis little joy,
To feel I'm farther off from Heaven
Than when I was a boy.”

Tempora mutantur ! I thought. Fancy quoting Tom Hood in a sermon !

Now those of you—continued Mr. Blank—who are old enough to look a little forward in life, and think what a fine thing it will be to be men and women, will perhaps be surprised and discouraged to hear me talking thus, as though it were really a bad thing to grow up, as though it were literally true, as those of old time used to say, that the persons God loved best died young. I am not saying that, and this chapter, with its solemn “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity,” does not say so either. I would not, and the Bible would not, ask you to forego one bold plan, or cheat

yourselves of one smile in life, provided it be a good and holy one. Religion was never meant to bring clouds on your young lives, but to be a sunshine all life through.

Again, I could not help thinking, parenthetically, of the chapters in *Chronicles* and *Browne's Reflections*.

It is not a little way the *Ecclesiastes* is looking forward, but a long way—from one extreme of life to the other, from golden childhood to grey silvery old age. And then how beautiful and perfect the contrast is! It is the contrast between morning and evening, between spring and winter. Shadowed evening and snowy winter seem sad in comparison of brilliant morning and blooming summer; and so they are, very sad and solemn. Their joys are joys of quite a different sort. This is the Preacher's picture of old age. He has a purpose in putting it close beside his picture of childhood, in running the one actually into the other.

"In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows shall be darkened, and the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low. Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond-tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail, because—and here follows his picture of death—man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets."

I wish I had time to tell you how well this perfect

picture describes the failure of the different powers and faculties in old age, and the going back of the old to second childhood. But one great point the Preacher wants to bring before you is how soon the one state passes into the other, childhood to age, life to death. It seems such a short time ago since I was sitting a little child like one of you, and listening to a preacher, not thinking I should ever come to preach myself!

And another lesson—the great lesson of all, in fact—is, that this failure of the powers, this passing from life to death, does not only take place in advanced age: sometimes it really is a very little while, as it always seems a very little while, before the rest of Ecclesiastes' picture is realized—

“Or even the silver cord be loosed or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel be broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, all is vanity.”

Go to any of the crowded cemeteries around this great city, where the sleepers in Jesus lie waiting for the Resurrection, and you will see what I mean. You will see how many graves of little children there are amongst those of aged persons and people in what we call the prime of life. I don't consider this a sad subject, or I should not mention it here. I call it the happiest subject we could talk about, if it only impresses on your minds the moral of the great

Preacher's sermon—"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

I have known what it is to follow one of my own children, who a little while before was healthy and well, to that same quiet sleeping-place. I have seen his little pale face looking up at me out of his coffin, and, sad as I was to lose him, I assure you I don't think sadly of him now. I take his brothers and sisters every now and then to hang flowers on the little cross above his grave; but I do feel with regard to him what the dead writer wrote of a little lost child: If one weak wish of ours could call that child back again, which of us would dare to utter it?

There—Mr. Blank as nearly as possible quoted Dickens in church! We must, I felt, be on the eve of some great change tantamount to the Deluge, or the Battle of Armageddon, or something of the kind.

Remember your Creator, he concluded. Think on God, and try to live like your Saviour now; and then, whenever you die, in childhood or old age, the day need not be a dark one for you. I am not trying to put old heads on young shoulders. I am only telling you to do what you promise to do every time you say your Catechism. Be good, obedient, teachable children, as Jesus was, so that whether you die young or live to be ever so old, it may be written of you, as it was of the child Christ at Nazareth, "He increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man."

And so Mr. Blank's little congregation resolved itself into atoms. They did not file out two and two, as I had expected to see them. There was a miniature Babel for a few minutes, and then all was quiet ; while I sat still there, and saw Mr. Blank pass to the font, and take some smaller fragments of humanity still in his arms, saying over each when gifted with the Christian name—

“ We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock, and do sign it with the sign of the Cross, in token that hereafter it shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto its life's end. Amen.”

And so—as Bunyan says—I passed on my way. I felt that Mr. Blank, parson though he was, had given me an idea or two, that had never been inspired by Browne's *Reflections on the Chapters in Chronicles*.

AN ORTHODOX SPIRIT SEANCE.

I FANCY I hear some benevolent reader, without forfeiting his proverbial character for amiability, enter a preliminary protest against any connexion between orthodoxy and the heresy of Modern Spiritualism. It is the fashion to suppose that all spiritualists are of that very advanced Broad Church against which is hurled by good people the awful polysyllable Latitudinarianism. There is no sort of difficulty in seeing how this has come to be the case. Spiritualism is tabooed. It is not a thing to be inquired into. It is false; or, if not false, wrong. Some people with an acrimony that is deliciously illogical say that it is both false and wrong. But, on the other hand, there are some people who aver that all God's works form proper objects of inquiry. Their creed is so large and undefined, their range of vision so extensive, that they include everything—even Modern Spiritualism—in their comprehensive embrace. Adherents of different religious schools approach the subject timidly, and, as it were, like Nicodemus, “by night;” but these Progressive folks make no secret of it at all. So it has come to be said that a belief in Spiritualism always goes hand

in hand with "advanced" religious opinions. It is only indiscriminating detractors who add the indictment of lax morality.

But I know a great many persons in every school of religious thought, Roman, Anglican, and Nonconformist, who reason thus—If we bid men in this way not doubt, but summarily disbelieve miracles which are alleged to be performed in their midst, and therefore to be subject to the test of their five senses, can we fairly ask them to credit other miracles whose occurrence, several centuries ago, is only narrated in a book, albeit that book is the Bible ?

Consequently some religious people, more logical than those who stand aloof altogether, proceed to "try the spirits," and profess to have proved by their exorcisms that the whole matter is diabolical, and therefore wisely refrain from practising it.

Others take quite an opposite course. They refuse to believe that God, as a God of mercy, would permit the access of evil spirits, and refuse man the ministry of angels. They believe that, in this respect, as in all others, man is bound to exercise the judgment and the free-will which God has given him. They seem to read in legends of Eden the theory written down for them, that good and evil spirits have equal access to man, and that his own moral condition determines which shall have supremacy.

It was my lot to meet with a clergyman of the Church of England who held these views ; and the practical outcome of his opinions seemed to me sufficiently curious to form an interesting subject for a paper. After many years' anxious struggle, he accepted the facts of Spiritualism, and assured me that, when he had done so, a new light seemed to enter his mind in the way of interpreting Scripture. "I found," he said, "I had been a Spiritualist all my life without knowing it." He determined to read his Bible through again from beginning to end, and to put an asterisk against every case of plain spiritual interference, analogous, as it appeared to him, to what he saw nightly taking place at the Spirit-circle. "The result was," he said, "I found every page of my Bible starred over when I had got to the end of my pleasant task."

He then resolved to organize a *séance* at his own house, which should be strictly a *religious service*. He would have no sceptics, either spiritualistic or religious, present. He would have it on Sunday evening, after the day's duty was over (for he was in full work, with a large parish in his charge), deeming that the influences would then be best. He selected one or two seriously-minded persons to be present with his family, and was polite enough, on one occasion, to invite me to fill a vacant place. The same circle, as far as possible, always met ; but sickness caused the interruption in this particular case. The

presence of a stranger, no doubt, affected the results on that evening, for it had begun to assume almost the character of a "miracle-circle," if all I heard was true. It is, however, rather in the light of a religious service than a pure *séance* that I wish to regard what I saw—an evidence how the spiritualistic movement is being taken up and incorporated into what seemed for a long time the counter-current of established religion in England.

We were six in all, three ladies and three gentlemen, one of the latter being the clergyman, the second his organist, and the third myself. Two of the ladies were married, and the third, young and single, had a fine voice, and acted as precentress in the musical service which ensued. It was held in a small back room, or study, fitted up simply as a little oratory. On an oak library-table were two candles and a standard cross; while religious pictures and photographs of lost beloved ones were hung on the wall. A hassock was placed in front of this quasi-altar; and my friend the clergyman, clad in the cassock he had just worn at evening service, took his place here, while the organist presided at a small harmonium. The ladies and myself stood round the little chess-table, where we were to hold our *séance*.

The service itself was bright and cheerful, and largely resembled the Compline Office which—originally belonging to the Roman Church—has

been adopted in many families in place of ordinary "Prayers" at bedtime, and in some churches as late Evensong. That service commences with the words, "May the Almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end;" in place of which was substituted the appropriate text—

"God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth."

This was monotoned upon a musical note, and the circle responded with harmonium accompaniment, "*Amen.*"

Then followed the Lord's Prayer, and the supplication for purity from the Communion Office—

"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name: Thy kingdom come: Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.—*Amen.*"

"Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy Holy Name, through Christ our Lord.—*Amen.*"

Then was sung, to the beautiful Gregorian chant called the "Angels' Tone," Psalm xci., from the Prayer-book; the minister and his little choir taking alternate verses, with harmonium accompaniment for each—

"Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the most High: shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

2. I will say unto the Lord, Thou art my hope, and my strong hold: my God, in him will I trust.

3. For he shall deliver thee from the snare of the hunter: and from the noisome pestilence.

4. He shall defend thee under his wings, and thou shalt be safe under his feathers: his faithfulness and truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

5. Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night: nor for the arrow that flieth by day;

6. For the pestilence that walketh in darkness: nor for the sickness that destroyeth in the noon-day.

7. A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand at thy right hand: but it shall not come nigh thee.

8. Yea, with Thine eyes shalt thou behold: and see the reward of the ungodly.

9. For thou, Lord, art my hope: thou hast set thine house of defence very high.

10. There shall no evil happen unto thee: neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

11. For he shall give his angels charge over thee: to keep thee in all thy ways.

12. They shall bear thee in their hands: that thou hurt not thy foot against a stone.

13. Thou shalt go upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou tread under thy feet.

14. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him up, because he hath known my Name.

15. He shall call upon me, and I will hear him: yea, I am with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and bring him to honour.

16. With long life will I satisfy him: and show him my salvation.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end.—Amen."

After this followed a short lesson from the Gospels, which, on the occasion in question, was the following—

" ST. JOHN xx. 19.

"The same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace

be unto you. And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

This was succeeded by Keble's Evening Hymn, which has now virtually supplanted Ken's familiar "Glory to Thee, my God, this night." It was sung to the tune, No. 11, in "Hymns Ancient and Modern."

"Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if Thou be near;
O may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes.

"When the soft dews of kindly sleep
My wearied eyelids gently steep,
Be my last thought how sweet to rest
For ever on my Saviour's breast.

"Abide with me from morn till eve,
For without Thee I cannot live;
Abide with me when night is nigh,
For without Thee I dare not die.

If some poor wandering child of Thine
Have spurned to-day the voice divine,
Now, Lord, the gracious work begin;
Let him no more lie down in sin.

"Watch by the sick: enrich the poor . . .
With blessings from Thy boundless store;
Be every mourner's sleep to-night,
Like infant's slumbers, pure and light.

"Come near and bless us when we wake,
Ere through the world our way we take,
Till in the ocean of Thy love
We lose ourselves in Heaven above.—Amen."

Then came the following prayers—

1. From the Burial Service.

Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity ; We give thee hearty thanks, for all those whom it hath pleased thee to deliver out of the miseries of this sinful world ; beseeching thee that it may please thee, of thy gracious goodness, shortly to accomplish the number of thine elect, and to hasten thy kingdom ; that we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of thy holy Name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in thy eternal and everlasting glory ; through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Amen.”

2. From the “Prayer for the Church Militant here in Earth.”

“We humbly beseech thee of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all them, who in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness or any other adversity. And we also bless thy holy Name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear ; beseeching thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom : Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate.—Amen.”

3. Collect for All Saints' Day.

“O Almighty God, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord ; Grant us grace so to follow thy blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys, which thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love thee : through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Amen.”

4. Collect for Michaelmas Day.

“O Everlasting God, who hast ordained and constituted the services of Angels and men in a wonderful order ; Mercifully grant, that as thy holy Angels alway do thee service in heaven, so by thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth : through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Amen.”

5. A Prayer of St. Chrysostom.

"Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests: Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting.—Amen."

The whole concluded with a special Benediction.

"Visit O Lord, we beseech thee, this dwelling, and drive far from it all snares of the enemy. May Thy holy Angels dwell with us, and preserve us in peace, both now and evermore.—Amen."

"The Almighty Lord, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us now and for ever.—Amen."

The *séance* which ensued was remarkable rather for the devotional and spiritual character of the communications than for any great display of power. I have seen so much that I am perhaps a little *blasé* in these matters. My object, moreover, is rather to describe the service than the *séance*; and I cannot help regarding it as an indication of a new phase in spiritualism—possibly of the dying out of the old antagonism between the new movement and what is technically termed "The Faith."

THE END.

